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# A PLAN TO STAND THE TEST OF TIME

The City of Hamtramck completed a thorough Master Plan effort in 2010. The result was a well-researched, detailed, and attractive document containing an extensive list of recommendations that are sufficent to guide community efforts over the intended long-range horizon.

However, change happens to even the most carefully planned communities. For this reason, it is recommended—and required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act—that the plan is reviewed periodically over this horizon to reflect new conditions, commit to strategic action, and adjust course where necessary. Such review also presents a further opportunity for investigation into topics that supplement the original vision.

This update accomplishes several goals.

- A subarea plan has been developed which presents a well-supported vision for the southern portion of the City, where longstanding and impending vacancies could create conditions for a rare large-scale redevelopment opportunity.
- Existing conditions have been updated with data reflecting changes over the last nine years.
- The implementation matrix in the 2010 plan has been updated to reflect the City's accomplishments.
- A new Action Plan outlines a strategy for continuing to advance the initatives on the matrix.
- A Zoning Plan details major areas of change to the zoning ordinance which will implement the Master Plan.

For ease of use, the updated materials have been folded into the 2010 Master Plan format. The new sections continue the document's appealing design and spirit of accessibility, and all of the information is readily available in the same place.





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# WELCOME TO HAMTRAMCK

The City of Hamtramck is a unique urban village tucked away in the center of Detroit. Those who have a connection to Hamtramck share a bond and affection for the City that is unusually strong. But those who do not have a personal link to the City often conflate it with Detroit. There is no doubt Hamtramck's fate is intertwined with Detroit's and greater southeast Michigan; the decline of the automotive industry and the nationwide recession have had a tremendous impact on the state and the region. And while Hamtramck shares the concerns of the wider region, in many ways Hamtramck stands apart. Hamtramck's compact, dense, walkable environment is a rare attribute in the region. For a City of its size, Hamtramck is remarkably diverse, and while the populations of Detroit and Wayne County were trending downward, Hamtramck's population saw a distinct uptick beginning in the 1990s. The growing immigrant population has made Hamtramck one of the most diverse and international cities in Michigan.

These characteristics provide a strong foundation upon which to stabilize and re-imagine the future of Hamtramck. Although, as one resident put it, "Hamtramck has always been right on the brink of a great break through," it has never reached the critical mass and momentum needed to fully revitalize the City. The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), with its Cities of Promise program, recognized Hamtramck as a community with potential in need of a push. Through the assistance of the Cities of Promise program, the City of Hamtramck determined that a master plan was a necessary step in its action plan for the redevelopment and revitalization of the City.

The purpose of the master plan is to bring Hamtramck out of hiding and into view, to define and tell its story through the words of its diverse communities, and to shape its future for the benefit of its current residents and bring in new ones. The master plan serves to pull together the many voices of Hamtramck into a common vision to guide the City's redevelopment and revitalization. "We've got all the potential in the world…we just need to find a way to make it happen. Let's harness that potential and do something with it."

The analysis of existing conditions documents Hamtramck as it exists today and voices the concerns and priorities of residents, business owners, community leaders, non-profit organizations, institutions, and civic leaders. The vision, recommendations and implementation strategy that follow provide a blueprint for revitalization that capitalizes on Hamtramck's unique assets.

MHAMTRAMCK POESN'T NEEP TO COME BACK, IT'S ALREAPY HERE AND WE JUST NEEP TO BRING IT OUT MORE! THERE'S A LOT OF KICK LEFT IN IT.!!



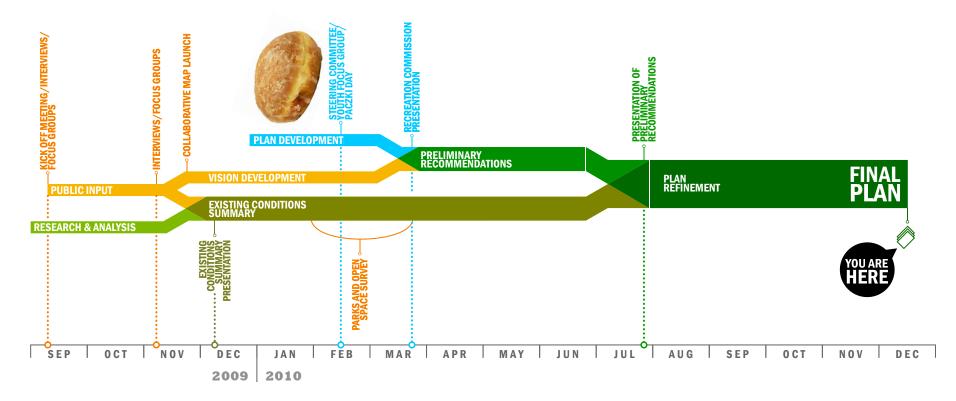
## **PLANNING PROCESS**

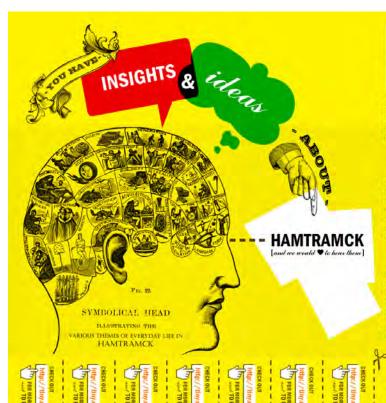
The Hamtramck Master Plan was conceived as a true, city-wide community-driven plan that will serve as a unified voice for local residents, business owners, institutions, students, community leaders, and political representatives, among others. As such, the planning process was designed to not only engage the public, but also help to build a sense of community among the City's diverse constituency.

To create a plan reflective of Hamtramck—its people and its character—requires an open and ongoing public dialog. The process informed and brainstormed with residents and stakeholders using a number of different outreach tools including:

- > Public meetings, interviews and focus groups throughout the process to capture the views of the City's diverse population
- > Collaborative mapping that gathered residents' insights and ideas regarding the future of the City
- > Quality of life mapping to enable residents to pinpoint their greatest concerns with regard to crime, lighting, traffic safety and illegal dumping
- Postcards from the future which asked residents to send the City a postcard about what they see in Hamtramck 20 years from now
- > An open space survey to determine how residents use and perceive local parks

This outreach was guided by a comprehensive, data-driven analysis of the city to frame both the issues and opportunities Hamtramck is facing in the context of the facts on the ground. The result is a plan rich in detail and forward thinking yet keenly aware of the funding challenges the City faces.





## **HAMTRAMCK MASTER PLAN**

sive master plan, a consensus-driven blueprint to help guide decisions about the future of the city. The most important part of this process is to engage the community in creating a collective vision for the future Here's how YOU can get involved!

#### - PUBLIC MEETING DEC 8 -

On Tuesday, December 8th at 6:00 pm at the Hamtramck Public Library, the second Hamtramck Master Plan public meeting will be held. The planning team will present their work to date, followed by an open discussion during which members of the community are invited to share their insights on life in Hamtramck and ideas for how it could be improved.

#### - COLLABORATIVE MAPS -

You can participate at your leisure by adding your input to the HUGE collaborative maps installed on the first floor of City Hall and in the Hamtramck Public Library. The maps serve as a way to collect the community's place-specific insights and ideas for how to improve the quality of life in Hamtramck, You can also contribute your thoughts to the ONLINE VERSION of the collaborative map! Check it out at ...

#### http://tiny.cc/hamtramckplan

#### SPREAD THE WORD!

Please help spread the word about the public meeting and the collaborative maps! We get our most valuable information and our best ideas from members of the

\_INTERFACE STUDIO



# **SUMMARY OF**

The recommendations section of the Master Plan presents a wide range of actions to be taken on to build on Hamtramck's strengths and work to improve its weaknesses in the following realms of life in the City:

- 1 Quality of Life and the Public Realm
- 2 Public Services and Facilities
- **3** Transportation
- 4 Cultural and Economic Development
- 5 Housing
- 6 Recreation and Open Space

The recommendations are intended to reflect Hamtramck's sense of optimism about the future, while remaining sensitive to the realities of the great fiscal and administrative challenges the City currently faces. As such, every chapter includes low cost recommendations as well as strategies that will save the City money over time.

# HAMTRAMCK MASTER PLAN

# QUALITY OF LIFE AND THE PUBLIC REALM

ENSURE THAT HAMTRAMCK IS CLEAN AND SAFE FOR RESIDENTS, EMPLOYEES AND VISITORS. VISUALLY EXPRESS HAMTRAMCK'S UNIQUE CHARACTER, DIVERSITY AND VIBE THROUGH AN ATTRACTIVE PUBLIC REALM.

The look and feel of a City speaks volumes about its identity and potential. A clean, safe, attractive and distinctive public realm builds local pride and communicates confidence to the outside world. Business owners, investors and residents alike are drawn to cities that are clean, well managed and welcoming. For this reason, many have expressed a need to strategically improve the "basics" in Hamtramck, from better lighting to cleaner and greener streets. This chapter includes recommendations targeted toward reducing litter and illegal dumping, expanding tree coverage, creatively managing vacant properties, physically improving the main entrances to Hamtramck, and expanding the capacity of block clubs to effectively tackle many of these concerns with City support.

Recommendations include:

## 1.1 Make an Impression at Gateways to the City

1.1.1 Improve the North Campau Gateway

1.1.2 Improve the South Campau Gateway

1.1.3 Improve the West Caniff Gateway

**1.1.4** Improve the I-75 Gateway at Nagel and Dequindre

**1.1.5** Make Improvements to the I-75 Shoulder, Underpasses, and Offramps



#### **1.2** Take Out the Trash

1.2.1 Proactively Enforce Cleaner Streets

1.2.2 Provide Trash Cans at Strategic Locations

1.2.3 Institute an Adopt-A-Can Program

1.2.4 Make Full Use of Free Clean-Up Resources

1.2.5 Mobilize Neighborhood Clean Ups

1.2.6 Creatively Discourage Illegal Dumping

## 1.3 Expand Vacant Land Management Efforts

1.3.1 Support Interim Urban Agriculture

**1.3.2** Make Temporary Low-Cost Improvements to Development Opportunity Gateway Sites

**1.3.3** Link Aspiring Green Thumbs with Community Gardening Space

**1.3.4** Create Partnerships with Established Greening Organization

## **1.4** Demolish Abandoned and Dangerous Structures

**1.4.1** Prioritize High-Impact Areas in Hamtramck

**1.4.2** Recommend Priority Tear-Downs in Neighboring Areas of Detroit

## **1.5** Improve the City's Tree Canopy

1.5.1 Adopt a Tree Ordinance

1.5.2 Conduct a City-Wide Tree Inventory

1.5.3 Adopt a Tree Planting Plan

1.5.4 Adopt a Tree Maintenance Plan

**1.5.5** Encourage the Community to Plant Trees

#### 1.6 Improve Night Visibility

**1.6.1** Prioritize Night Visibility Improvement Areas

**1.6.2** Upgrade Lighting Infrastructure to Improve Efficiency

**1.6.3** Establish a Resident-Assisted Neighborhood Lighting Improvement Program

# PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

USE TECHNOLOGY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITY UPGRADES TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF CITY SERVICES, MINIMIZE COSTS, RELIEVE STAFFING CONSTRAINTS, AND REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.

City budget shortfalls and staffing constraints are two of Hamtramck's most challenging issues. Nevertheless, some of Hamtramck's most important needs lie within the realm of public services and facilities. It will certainly be a financial and logistical difficulty to implement many of the recommendations in this chapter, but the results these ideas should achieve are paramount to making the City of Hamtramck safer, more efficient, more responsive to the needs of residents of all ages, and, in short, a better place to live, visit, and run a business.

Recommendations include:

## **2.1** Expand Stormwater Management Capacity

- **2.1.1** Implement Planned Stormwater Management Infrastructure Improvements
- **2.1.2** Increase Awareness Of Stormwater Best Management Practices
- **2.1.3** Toughen Zoning Landscaping Requirements
- **2.1.4** Use Public Facility Grounds to Set A Good Example
- **2.1.5** Green the Streets
- **2.1.6** Consider Levying an Impervious Area



## **2.2** Set an Example for Sustainable Practices

- 2.2.1 Shed Some Light on Being Green
- 2.2.2 Pave the Way for Green Development
- **2.2.3** Establish Regular Recycling Services in Hamtramck
- 2.2.4 Recycle Everything
- **2.2.5** Consider Green Retrofits to Increase Energy Efficiency of Public Facilities
- **2.2.6** Increase Public Awareness of Energy Efficiency Resources

## **2.3** Address Snow Removal Problems

#### 2.4 Establish Safer Streets

- **2.4.1** Continue Cultural Education Workshops
- **2.4.2** Reinforce the Force When Necessary
- **2.4.3** Assign Police Officers to Serve as Community Liaisons

- **2.4.4** Coordinate with Resident Groups to Establish Community Policing
- **2.4.5** Supplement Patrols with Bicycle Policing
- 2.4.6 Seek to Reinstate the K9 Unit
- **2.4.7** Modernize the Police Department's Records Management System

## 2.5 Better Equip the Fire Department

- **2.5.1** Improve the Fire Department's Equipment
- 2.5.2 Paint the Hydrants
- **2.5.3** Improve the Fire Station and Plan for Its Future

## **2.6** Continue to Improve Education Resources and Facilities

- **2.6.1** Evaluate Hamtramck's Education Resources
- 2.6.2 Prioritize Facility Needs
- **2.6.3** Engage the Charter Schools

# city needs a major WEBSITE OWERHAUL could be a resource center to many degrees...

keep this online map! an SUSY TO USE ONLINE INTERACTIVE MAP like this one could be used by residents to communicate PROBLEM SPOTS to city officials. it would serve the community in giving them a sounding board and another way to communicate with CITY HALL.





Residents were vocal about their thoughts about the City's website and how it could be improved.

**2.6.4** Create an After School Arabic Program

## 2.7 Support the Expansion of the Hamtramck Public Library

**2.7.1** Initiate a Facilities Planning and Feasibility Study

**2.7.2** Address Parking Constraints

2.7.3 Pursue Temporary Satellite Locations

**2.7.4** Increase Awareness of the Library's Resources

#### 2.8 Fill Holes In The Service Gaps

2.8.1 Undertake a Social Services Audit

**2.8.2** Create a Coordinated Hamtramck Service Directory and Referral System

2.8.3 Expand Youth Programming

**2.8.4** Provide Night Activities and Safe Havens for Youth

2.8.5 Help Foreign-Born Residents Establish New Roots in Hamtramck

2.8.6 Establish an "Almost Free Clinic" in Hamtramck

## **2.9** Plug City Hall in to New Technology Resources

**2.9.1** Conduct an Information Technology Needs Assessment for City Agencies

**2.9.2** Modernize Records Keeping and Data Management

**2.9.3** Reboot the City's Website

**2.9.4** Establish a City Hall Compu-Concierge

2.9.5 Overhaul Parcel Database Management

## **TRANSPORTATION**

ESTABLISH BALANCED STREETS WITH IMPROVED SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR DRIVERS, PEDESTRIANS, AND BICYCLISTS ALIKE. ENHANCE RIGHT-OF-WAYS TO PROMOTE THE CITY'S IMAGE, CREATE A MORE PLEASANT PUBLIC REALM, AND STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS. CREATE BETTER TRANSIT CONNECTIONS WITHIN HAMTRAMCK AND TO/FROM LOCATIONS OUTISIDE THE CITY.

Transportation is not just about getting from point a to point b—it impacts the City's image, healthy, safety, and economic development. Hamtramck's streets constitute the majority of the public realm—the environment that residents and workers experience on a daily basis; that provides the backdrop for the creation of memories; that creates impressions on visitors intrinsically linked to perception of the City itself. Public investment in Hamtramck's streets and sidewalks will bring great benefits to many other aspects of life in Hamtramck, as well as to the image of the City in the minds of those who have experienced it.

These days, referring to walking, biking, and public transit as "alternative modes" of transportation is an outdated concept. The overall goal is to create a balanced street system that is safe for pedestrians, bikers, and motorists alike, and provides convenient access to public transit.

Recommendations include:

## **3.1** Prioritize Street Improvement Projects

**3.1.1** Maximize the Opportunity of Street Reconstruction Projects

**3.1.2** Reconstruct Campau Between Caniff and Carpenter



- 3.1.3 Reconstruct Conant Street
- **3.1.4** Improve Intersection of Conant and Commor
- **3.1.5** Improve Intersection Sight Distances

## **3.2** Restore Public Alleys

- 3.2.1 Improve Code Enforcement of Alley Maintenance
- 3.2.1 Transform Alleys as Community Assets

## **3.3** Strenghten Walkability and Sidewalk Accessibility

**3.3.1** Reduce Crossing Distances at Select Intersections

- **3.3.2** Increase Access to Crossing Locations on Busy Streets
- **3.3.3** Stripe Crosswalks to Increase Pedestrian Visibility
- **3.3.4** Continue Efforts to Improve Pedestrian Safety Near Schools
- **3.3.5** Improve Sidewalks
- **3.3.6** Use Zone Approach to Improve Sidewalk Accessibility
- **3.3.7** Establish a Pedestrian Advocacy Group

## **3.4** Accommodate Bikes on Roadways

**3.4.1** Support the Implementation of the

#### Hamtramck Bikeway

- **3.4.2** Establish a Complete Bike Network
- **3.4.3** Support Bike and Trail Planning to Improve Connections Outside of Hamtramck

## 3.5 Create a Safe Biking Environment

- **3.5.1** Provide Safe and Convenient Bike Parking
- **3.5.2** Light the Way for Bikes
- 3.5.3 Put Training Wheels on Bikers and Drivers
- **3.5.4** Strategically Mobilize Police and Street Safety Liaisons to Ensure Safer Biking

**3.5.5** Continually Review Intersection Design for Bike Friendliness

#### **3.6** Support Bike Culture

**3.6.1** Bring Bike Culture into the Spotlight

3.6.2 Develop Local Bike Advocacy

#### **3.7** Address Parking Issues

**3.7.1** Develop Smart City-Wide Parking Policy

3.7.2 Address On-Street Residential Parking Constraints

**3.7.3** Improve Signage Directing Drivers to Parking Lots

## **3.8** Improve Access to Public Transportation Options

3.8.1 Create Design Standards for Bus Shelters

3.8.2 Advocate for Improved Transit Connections to Detroit

3.8.3 Create a Hamtramck Transit Center

**3.8.4** Advocate for Rail Transit

## **3.9** Improve Signage And Wayfinding

4

# CULTURAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS IN A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT TO MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL OF HAMTRAMCK'S CREATIVE AND PRODUCTIVE ECONOMY. CULTIVATE LOCAL BUSINESSES WHILE ATTRACTING OUTSIDE INVESTMENTS TO CREATE NEW JOBS AND INCREASE TAX REVENUES. PROMOTE THE CITY'S UNIQUE AND DIVERSE CULTURES AND LOCAL DESTINATIONS TO THE GREATER DETROIT AREA AND BEYOND. PROMOTE, SUPPORT AND EXPAND THE ARTS.

Numerous interviews were conducted with stake-holders and interested community members who had something to say about Hamtramck's economic challenges and opportunities. Combined with our own assessment of Hamtramck's economy, a sustainable economic development plan for Hamtramck must focus on a combination of making economic development a priority for the city, workforce training, continuing to promote the city's main commercial activity, supporting small business and leveraging local culture and the arts.

For a City with such a small area, Hamtramck has a lot of cultural, commercial, and creative activity going on. The following series of recommendations that fall under the umbrella of cultural and economic development might have been developed for a city twice the size of Hamtramck. It is not intended to serve as a blueprint for all-inclusive implementation, but rather as a universe of actions that the City and local organizations and entrepreneurs should consider undertaking as stakeholders in the continued vitality of the City of Hamtramck.

Recommendations include:



## 4.1 Strengthen The Structure Of Economic Development In City Hall

**4.1.1** Elevate the Economic Development Corporation

**4.1.2** Strengthen the Case for Locating in Hamtramck

**4.1.3** Continue and Expand Opportunity Site Marketing Efforts

**4.1.4** Set a Consistent Approach to New Development

**4.1.5** Advocate for Neighborhood Improvements

## **4.2** Strengthen and Retrain the Local Workforce

4.2.1 Assess Employer Needs

**4.2.2** Promote Workforce Readiness

## **4.3** Foster Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development

**4.3.1** Create a Business Services One-Stop in City Hall

4.3.2 Expand Local Food Businesses

# 4.4 Re-Establish Roles for the Chamber of Commerce and Marketing and Events Coordination Activities in City Hall

**4.4.1** Represent the Interests of All Businesses in the City

4.4.2 Sell the City

**4.4.3** Be Green

4.4.4 Buy Local

4.4.5 Fill Out the Events Calendar

**4.4.6** Turn Up the Volume on Hamtramck Blowout and the Local Music Scene

4.4.7 Expand Multicultural Events

## **4.5** Expand and Promote the City's Brand[s]

## **4.6** Increase Visitorship & Showcase the City's Assets

**4.6.1** Actively Market Hamtramck as a Destination to Residents of Detroit and Inner Ring Suburbs

**4.6.2** Market Hamtramck to Detroit Visitors

4.6.3 Crowdsource Local Tour Guidance

**4.6.4** Improve Access to Information about Local Destinations

4.6.5 Launch a Hamtramck Chotchkies & Top Notch Tees Pop Up Shop

**4.6.6** Preserve and Expand Visitor Destinations

**4.6.7** Establish Local Hospitality Businesses

## **4.7** Improve the Commercial Corridor Experience

**4.7.1** Leverage the Downtown Development Authority

**4.7.2** Form a Conant Street Corridor Improvement District

**4.7.3** Encourage Businesses to Install Alternative Sign Designs

**4.7.4** Tap into Local Artists to Activate Vacant Storefronts

**4.7.5** Encourage Use of the Façade Improvement Program

4.7.6 Improve Signage to Public Parking

**4.7.7** Consider Supplementary Public Parking Options

4.7.8 Make Parking Pay

# 4.8 Develop and Enforce Ordinances and Regulations to Maintain Public Safety and Optimal Use of Business Districts

**4.8.1** Bring Bicycle Policing and Foot Patrols to Commercial Corridors

4.8.3 Actively Discourage Panhandling

4.8.2 Regulate Truck Delivery Hours

## **4.9** Re/Define Commercial Corridor Zoning & Design Guidelines

**4.9.1** Allow Building Setback Flexibility in Certain Cases



Temporary uses to activate vacant storefronts can enliven Hamtramck's commercial corridors.





**4.9.2** Limit Curb Cuts in the Commercial C2 Zone

**4.9.3** Enforce Primary Entrance Requirements

**4.9.4** Discourage Use of Metal Security Fencing

## **4.10** Attract New Commercial Development

**4.10.1** Develop a Specific Strategy for the Former Shoppers World Site

4.10.2 Retrofit Hamtramck Town Center

4.10.3 Fill the Commercial Gaps

**4.10.4** Establish New Small Businesses that Strengthen and Reinforce Hamtramck's Unique Identity

**4.10.5** Selectively Attract National Businesses to Supplement Local Business Districts

## **4.11** Attract a Higher Education Institution to Hamtramck

#### 4.12 Create an Arts and Cultural Council for the City of Hamtramck

**4.12.1** Develop the Local Arts and Cultural Scene

**4.12.2** Provide Entrepreneurial and Development Support for Creative Professionals

**4.12.3** Develop Intentional Relationships with Local and Regional Arts Organizations Outside the City

#### **4.13** Bring Creativity to the Streets

**4.13.1** Explore a Variety of Potential Funding Sources

**4.13.2** Utilize Vacant Lots for Creative Programming

## **4.14** Strengthen the Creative Community

**4.14.1** Develop Local Creative Skills and Establish a Campus for Artistic Instruction

**4.14.2** Create Shared Production Spaces

## **4.15** Develop New Outlets for Art in Hamtramck

**4.15.1** Marry Art and Existing Commercial Establishments

4.15.2 Assist Arts Community in Establishing Permanent Galleries and Event Spaces

**4.15.3** Selectively Unearth Underground Assets

## **4.16** Get Industrial Development Back in Gear

**4.16.1** Retain Existing Industrial Producers

**4.16.2** Formulate an Industrial Development Strategy

**4.16.3** Review Zoning Requirements for Industrial Developments

## 5

## **HOUSING**

RETAIN RESIDENTS BY STRENGTHENING NEIGHBORHOODS AND ENCOURAGING THE REHABILITATION OF AGING HOUSING STOCK. INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY HOUSING OPTIONS TO CONTINUE TO WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS.

Hamtramck faces unique pressures with regard to its housing stock. It is a community of choice, particularly for immigrants, which explains both the City's recent gains in population but also its high rate of resident turnover. In 2000, 53% of to the City's households had moved to Hamtramck since 1995. Those families are occupying housing built many years ago. Hamtramck's aging housing stock presents a challenge to existing and potential new residents, not only because of the additional maintenance it requires, but also because there is a great lack of diversity in the housing stock, which may not serve the needs of modern family life.

The following recommendations seek to build value for residents by upgrading existing housing and supporting responsible property owners, attract new residents and homeowners, and pressure negligent owners to improve their properties. New and rehabilitated housing should offer a variety of choices to accommodate a diverse population that spans across racial, economic and generational boundaries.

Recommendations include:

#### **5.1** Improve Existing Housing

5.1.1 Improve Housing Code Enforcement

**5.1.2** Provide Support for Existing Homeowners to Help Residents Improve Their Properties







Hamtramck's only building over three stories [aside from the senior living towers] is currently in the permitting phase to reclaim the long-vacant upper floors for living spaces.

5.1.3 Demolish Dangerous and Abandoned Structures

## **5.2** Expand Housing Services for Homeowners, Renters, and Landlords

5.2.1 Retain Existing Homeowners and Encourage Eligible Renters to Buy Homes in Hamtramck

5.2.2 Expand Homeowner and Homebuyer Education About Predatory Lending

5.2.3 Support Good Landlords

5.2.4 Support the Creation of a Hamtramck Tenants' Association to Resolve Tenant-Landlord Disputes

**5.2.5** Improve Housing Services for the Growing Immigrant and Foreign-Born Population

#### 5.3 Promote Hamtramck's Neighborhoods and Expand Local Capacity

**5.3.1** Increase Awareness of Block Club Organizations

5.3.2 Develop a Comprehensive List of Neighborhood Websites and Offer Web-Design Assistance to Communities Without a Web Presence

5.3.3 Create a Collection of House and Neighborhood Tours that Market Different Eras of the City's Growth

**5.3.4** Undertake Grass-Roots Comprehensive Plans for Neighborhoods to Inform Investment Decisions

## **5.4** Establish the Foundation for New Housing Development

5.4.1 Resolve the R-31 Lawsuit



Development opportunities for providing more student housing in Hamtramck, such as the potential redevelopment of the former Shopper's World, should be actively pursued.

**5.4.2** Pursue Affordable Housing Development Resources

**5.4.3** Encourage New Development through an Effective Permitting Process

**5.4.4** Subsidize Artist Studios/Housing in Exchange for Community Service

5.4.5 Create a New Residential Infill Zoning Category

**5.4.6** Allow a More Urban Mixed Use Typology

5.4.7 Consider Reducing Parking Requirements in Residential Zones

**5.4.8** Encourage Green Retrofits and Sustainable Living

## **5.5** Pursue New Housing Development Opportunities

5.5.1 Encourage Infill Housing on Vacant Lots

**5.5.2** Provide Support for Conversion or Renovation of Upper Floors for Residential Use

5.5.3 Strengthen Hamtramck's Student Housing Supply

**5.5.4** Consider the Potential for Transit-Oriented Development

5.5.5 Pursue Hope VI Redevelopment of Colonel Hamtramck Homes

6

# RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

MAKE HAMTRAMCK'S OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AN ASSET TO THE CITY. MAXIMIZE THE OPPORTUNITIES OF EXISTING RESOURCES. INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY THE AMENITIES OFFERED IN PARKS AND PLAY SPACES TO BETTER SUIT THE NEEDS OF HAMTRAMCK'S COMMUNITIES.

The Recreation & Open Space chapter of this plan is intended to lay the foundation for the City to apply for State funding and other resources to improve parks and play spaces throughout Hamtramck. The strategies presented in the Master Plan build on the 2003 City of Hamtramck Parks and Recreation Master Plan that established a vision and objectives for local parks. Recognizing that much has changed in the City since that timeframe, this process was careful to generate public input specific to Hamtramck's recreation and open space resources. As a result of community outreach, this chapter recommends new policies and administrative functions to improve park spaces, identifies new programming opportunities to meet resident needs, establishes specific site improvement plans for community assets such as Veteran's Park, and identifies potential new park space to be created in the City.

Recommendations include:

#### 6.1 Consolidate Park Stewardship

# **6.2** Encourage Community Stewardship of Parks and Open Spaces

**6.2.1** Establish Friends-Of Park Groups

**6.2.2** Institute an Inmate Work Crew Park Clean Up Program

# 6.3 Improve the Quality of Hamtramck's Parks and Play Spaces

**6.3.1** Provide Wireless Broadband and Charging Ports for Public Spaces

**6.3.2** Create a More Welcoming Pope Park

**6.3.3** Revitalize Veteran's Park

**6.3.4** Improve School Recreation Spaces

**6.3.5** Consider Alternative Recreational Programming

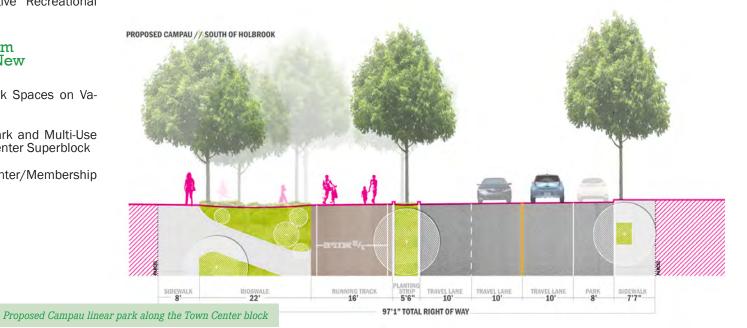
# **6.4** Consider Long-Term Opportunities for New Recreation Spaces

6.4.1 Establish New Park Spaces on Vacant Lots

**6.4.2** Create a Linear Park and Multi-Use Path Around the Town Center Superblock

**6.4.3** Create a Teen Center/Membership Gym





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# WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

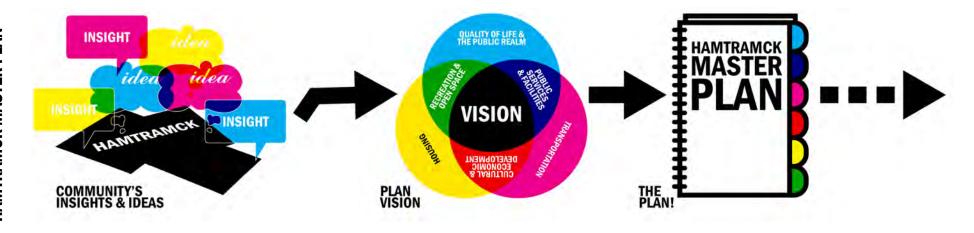
As the first comprehensive plan undertaken for the City since the 1970s, it was the responsibility of this work to evaluate the potential future and not limit the strategies based solely on what the City can do on its own. This means that although this work was sponsored by the City, the scope was much broader resulting in a series of recommendations that necessitates great cooperation, hard work, and persistence to ensure that resulting change delivers success to the residents, business owners, and stakeholders in Hamtramck. This document is a guide and while there are many strategies that the City can seek funds independently, many others require the City to continue the conversation and build greater momentum moving forward. City and State agencies, local institutions, and interested developers must form an active dialog about these recommendations. The City will need to creatively blend dollars from both public and private sources to maximize impact.

The City and its coalition of involved residents and local institutions will need to take several important next steps—with the State of Michigan, regional organizations like MSHDA, with potential funders, and with the residents and stakeholders themselves—to ensure that those involved stay involved and embrace an active role in the plan's implementation.

- > Submit the plan for adoption
- Present this plan, in full, to interested foundations
- > Get Involved with Detroit Works
- > Form Action Teams to serve as a resident and stakeholder-driven force for implementation. The Action Teams should correspond to the goal areas established in the recommendations section

- of this plan. In this way, the Action Teams will directly address the City's critical needs.
- Add organizational capacity in terms of new staff to keep up with existing responsibilities plus new tasks stemming from the plan.

The plan includes an Implementation Matrix that details the timeframe and potential partners for each recommendation. The spreadsheet is intended to serve as a guide to help organize and track the City's and their partner's progress in implementing the plan's components. It should be used actively, updated, and changed once implementation commences.











ture/d.i.y.

cultural diversity



"a touch of the world in america!"

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liversity

Hamoungale

"a touch of  $the\ world$  in america!"

## **PURPOSE OF THE PLAN**

The overarching purpose of the Hamtramck Master Plan is to provide a comprehensive playbook that the City and their partners can use to bring about positive change. Hamtramck has not had a completed master plan since the 1970s. Without an adopted Master Plan, Hamtramck is simply missing out on the opportunity to apply for dollars from many different funding sources, limiting the scope of what can reasonably be accomplished to improve the City.

The plan is intended to fulfill MSHDA's requirements as a "City of Promise" and to provide a proactive framework that will help allocate the City's limited resources [in terms of both time and money] over the coming decade.

#### **Planning Principles**

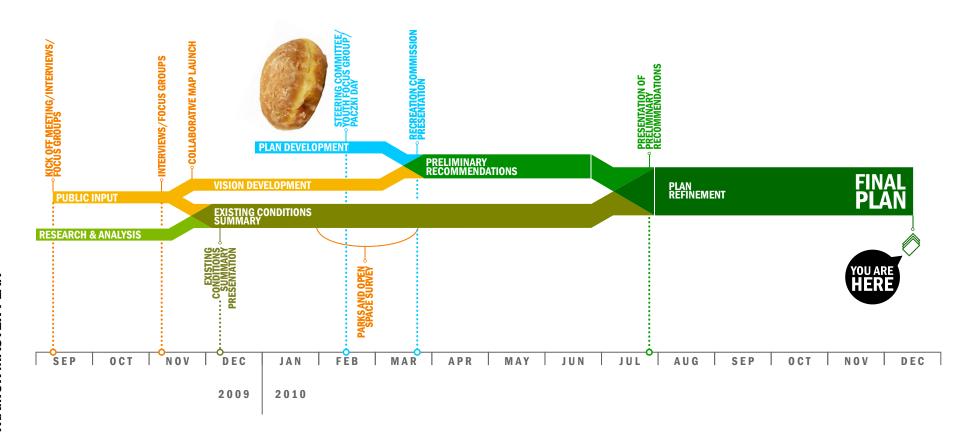
As a process and an end product, the Plan must strive to:

- > Build upon the momentum and energy already at work in the City.
- > Empower additional residents, business owners and non-profits as involved participants and agents of change.
- Listen well and clearly document the community's vision and priorities for the future of Hamtramck.
- Take stock of proposed projects, considering their impact on the City and adjacent neighborhoods
- Create an updated basemap and GIS database of the community's existing conditions and establishes a baseline against which to measure progress.
- Devise a strategy for revitalization that is both visionary and pragmatic, depicting what a stabilized future could and should look like in the context of a shrinking city and region.
- > Coordinate the efforts of the city, non-profit organizations, churches, and residents, ensuring that all public interventions and private investments are consistent with the vision for the City.
- > Identify do-it-yourself ["DIY"] projects that can be undertaken at low or no cost by the community.
- Nurture existing partnerships and foster new ones including the Detroit Works initiative to enable a collaborative implementation process.
- > Guide funding decisions and raise money to improve Hamtramck.

#### **Key Goals**

The key goals of the City of Hamtramck Master Plan are to:

- Improve quality of life for residents by building on the energy and enthusiasm of residents, block clubs, business owners and artists
- Improve the quality and efficiency of public services for residents throughout Hamtramck while reducing costs to the City over time
- Calm traffic and encourage alternative modes of transportation including walking and bicycling
- Make economic development a central objective of the City to improve downtown, retain and attract jobs and, build on the City's unique arts and cultural heritage
- Coordinate housing initiatives for both homeowners, renters and landlords such that all residents have access to safe and affordable housing
- Improve recreation and open space resources to meet the needs of the area's diverse youth and cultural backgrounds
- > Begin to build bridges between the City's multiple communities by engaging them in the planning process and enlisting their assistance in the plan's implementation



## **PLANNING PROCESS**

The planning process for the City of Hamtramck Master Plan began in September 2009 and continued through the end of 2010. The planning process, led by the Interface Studio team and overseen by the City and a project Steering Committee, consisted of three phases:

#### **Research and Existing Conditions**

- Creation of a GIS basemap by combining an updated Wayne County parcel database layer with aerial photography and new data layers including curbs and buildings
- A parcel-by-parcel survey of the entire City to create an updated land use map and determine building conditions
- An in-depth examination of the physical environment to assess the existing commercial and retail mix, the distribution of service providers and institutions, the quality of the natural environment, local traffic and circulation patterns, the transit system, parking resources, and pedestrian amenities
- Census and SEMCOG data research to evaluate demographic and socioeconomic changes within the City over time
- A review of historic maps and photographs and past planning documents
- > Public outreach included two public meetings, focus groups, interviews and a collaborative map designed to get the gossip on the ground and access the qualitative aspects of the City
- Processing the information collected during the analysis to identify opportunities and challenges for the future of Hamtramck

## **Preliminary Recommendations**

- A list of goals and objectives based upon public input
- Additional focus groups with business owners, artists and youth
- An open space survey to determine resident perceptions of existing parks
- A series of preliminary recommendations for achieving key goals and balancing observed trends and projections with desired outcomes
- Presenting the preliminary recommendations to the City for feedback and critique at a public meeting

#### Final Master Plan Phase

- A refined set of recommendations in response to the public input gathered at the close of Phase Two
- A Draft Hamtramck Master Plan provided to the City for review and distribution to key community leaders and stakeholders
- An Action and Phasing Strategy that defines priorities and indicates a timeframe and potential partners for each recommendation
- Final Master Plan for submission to City Council for adoption

The City of Hamtramck, its coalition of involved neighborhood institutions and leaders, and all interested stakeholders will then assume responsibility for the Master Plan, its adoption, and its implementation.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

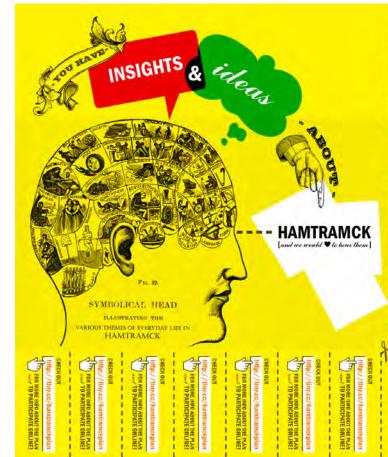
The Hamtramck Master Plan was conceived as a city-wide community-driven plan that will serve as a unified voice for local residents, business owners, institutions, students, community leaders, and political representatives, among others. As such, the planning process was designed to not only engage the public, but also help to build a sense of community among the City's diverse constituency.

To create a plan reflective of Hamtramck—its people and its character—requires an open and ongoing public dialog. Thus far, the City and the Interface Studio team has talked, listened, and brainstormed with community members using a number of methods and techniques.

#### **Public Meetings**

Four open public meetings were held as forums to discuss major findings and ideas. These included:

- > A kick off meeting in September of 2009 to explain the planning process, introduce ourselves and get some initial feedback.
- A public meeting in December of 2009 which brought the Existing Conditions phase to a close. At the meeting, the Interface Studio team presented the analysis findings to the City for comment and critique and encouraged the community to jumpstart the plan's recommendations by providing their insights into the potential future.
- A public meeting held in July of 2010 to share the plan's recommendations. Participants were asked to help the planning team prioritize the recommendations into early-action and priority projects.



## HAMTRAMCK MASTER PLAN

The City of Hamtramck is updating its comprehensive master plan, a consensus-driven blueprint to help guide decisions about the future of the city. The most important part of this process is to engage the community in creating a collective vision for the future. Here's how YOU can got involved!

#### - PUBLIC MEETING DEC 8 -

On Tuesday, December 8th at 6:00 pm at the Hamtramck Public Library, the second Hamtramck Master Plan public meeting will be held. The planning team will present their work to date, followed by an open discussion during which members of the community are invited to share their insights on life in Hamtramck and ideas for how it could be improved.

#### - COLLABORATIVE MAPS -

You can participate at your leisure by adding your input to the HUGE collaborative maps installed on the first floor of City Hall and in the Hamtramck Public Library. The maps serve as a way to collect the community's place-specific insights and ideas for how to improve the quality of life in Hamtramck. You can also contribute your thoughts to the ONLINE VERSION of the collaborative map! Check it out at...

#### http://tiny.cc/hamtramckplan

#### SPREAD THE WORD!

Please help spread the word about the public meeting and the collaborative maps! We get our most valuable information and our best ideas from members of the community!

\_INTERFACE STUDIO



The first public meeting [left] was a kick-off presentation held at Hamtramck Public Library in September 2009. Interface Studio produced fliers [above] and advertisements to increase public awareness of public meetings and participation opportunities. The plan used social networking to increase its online presence [right], making fans out of 563 Facebook users.

## facebook

#### Name: City of Hamtramck Master Plan Update



Fans: **563** 

#### **Interviews**

Over 60 interviews were conducted with a diverse range residents, community leaders, local developers, service providers, City staff, and political representatives. These interviews gave the planning team a window into the opportunities and challenges of the City.

## **Focus Groups**

After completion of the analysis, the planning team generated a number of ideas and shared them in eight focus groups. The focus groups were advertised and open to the public and quickly filled with representatives from distinct stakeholder groups in the neighborhood, each with unique concerns and opinions regarding the future of the area and the City. Together, the Interface Studio team and city staff conducted discussions with the following constituencies: neighborhood block clubs, two focus groups with local youth, artists, business owners on Conant Street, the DDA, MEDC and City staff.

## **Collaborative Mapping**

In the fall of 2009. Interface Studio created and installed two collaborative maps in the City—one in the Hamtramck Public Library and one in City Hall. The maps featured very large-scale street maps of the City of Hamtramck to which participants affixed stickers marked with a unique serial number. After placing a sticker on the map at the relevant location, participants provided written descriptions of their insights about or ideas for improving the specific location on an index card with the corresponding serial number. Filled out idea and insight cards were hung next to the maps so that others could read previous contributions and match the card number to a sticker number on the map. After the maps had been installed for several weeks, the Interface Studio reviewed the 75 collaborative map contributions and took them into consideration

## HAMTRAMCK MASTER PLAN collaborative MAP

- Library -- City <u>Hall</u> -- Online! -

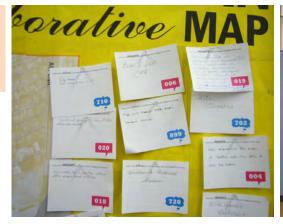
http://tiny.cc/hamtramckplan



if you have **thoughts and observations** to share about specific locations in hamtramck, ask for an **INSIGHT** card and sticker set.

if you have a **brilliant idea** for how to improve a specific location in hamtramck, ask for an *idea* card and sticker set.

Community members contributed 75 ideas and insights to the collaborative maps installed in City Hall and the Hamtramck Public Library.





along with the many other sources of public input gathered throughout the planning process.

An online version of the collaborative map was also created on the Interface Studio website. 132 insights and ideas were mapped by Hamtramck community members and the interactive map was viewed over 2,500 times over the course of the Master Plan process. Place-specific public input proved an invaluable source of information to determine identify public realm issues in the existing conditions analysis and prioritize action areas going into the recommendations phase of the Master Plan.

#### Postcards from the Future

Residents were asked to write postcards from the year 2029 and tell us what they see, projecting how Hamtramck will have changed over the course of the next twenty years. The postcards were distributed at the public meeting and subsequent focus group meetings to encourage more opportunities for residents to offer their vision for the future. The completed postcards provided a rich collection of ideas of imagery – a testament to the local creativity and commitment to the City as a whole.

#### **On-Line Open Space Survey**

Given the high resident turnover rate and the great importance of ensuring that the recreation and open space components of the Master Plan reflect the community's needs and wishes, Interface Studio created a community survey for Hamtramck residents to provide their thoughts about the City's existing parks and play spaces, as well as contribute their ideas about how they should be improved. The 161 surveys completed by members of the community provided a wealth of information regarding the City's parks and recreational facilities, a summary of which is provided in the existing conditions analysis section of this plan.



The online collaborative map [above] received a total of 132 placemarkers from participants. During a youth focus group with Hamtramck High School students [below left], the teens filled out "Postcards from the Future," [below right].





## **Priority Actions**

Following the presentation of preliminary recommendations, public meeting attendees were asked to assign priorities to the initiatives presented that they felt were the most important for the City and its implementation partners to take action on. Each participant was given a top priority sticker, second priority sticker, and third priority sticker and asked to apply these three stickers to their top three ranked concerns among those presented. The number of each priority rank sticker received by the initiatives presented are shown in Fig. 1. The top three priorities were "Improve the Quality of Hamtramck's Existing Parks," "Improve Commercial Corridors," and "Improve Existing Housing."



**1** Priority actions public input

# HOW TO NAVIGATE THE PLAN

The recommendations section of the Master Plan presents a wide range of actions to be taken on to build on Hamtramck's strengths and work to improve its weaknesses in the following realms of life in the City:

- 1 Quality of Life and the Public Realm
- 2 Public Services and Facilities
- **3** Transportation
- 4 Cultural and Economic Development
- 5 Housing
- 6 Recreation and Open Space

The recommendations are intended to reflect Hamtramck's sense of optimism about the future, while remaining sensitive to the realities of the great fiscal and administrative challenges the City currently faces. While each chapter has its own set of recommendations [as set forth in the introductory statement preceding each chapter], many of the recommendations throughout the chapters share a number of common threads that are intentional themes woven throughout the plan to demonstrate some of the planning principles used to place an emphasis on realistic and implementable goals. These themes are denoted throughout the recommendations section by a series of associated icons.



#### **Immediate Action Initiatives**

Carrying the momentum of the Master Plan forward into action requires identifying improvements the City and others can make immediately. The "clock" icon accompanies several recommendations that can and should be taken on in the very near future. An index of Immediate Action Recommendations is provided in the implementation section of the Master Plan.



## Hammy Bank

While the majority of the recommendations in the Master Plan will likely save the City money in the long run, the "Piggy Bank" icon identifies recommendations that place an emphasis on making changes that will improve Hamtramck's fiscal efficiency, an objective that has special relevance at this particular moment in Hamtramck's history and one that's always useful to keep in mind even in times of greater economic prosperity [or fuller piggy banks].



#### Green Is Gold

Creating a more sustainable Hamtramck is a goal that can be achieved through many of the recommendations throughout the chapters of the Hamtramck Master Plan. The "recycle" icon identifies initiatives that would make Hamtramck a greener and more environmentally-sound City.



#### D.I.Y. Improvements

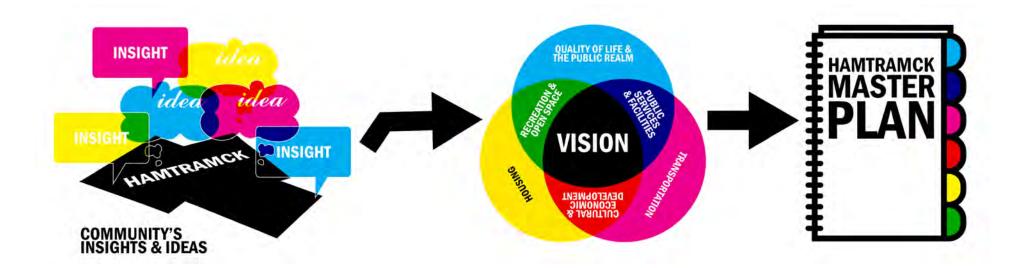
While City Hall is the primary agent of implementation for the recommendations of the Hamtramck Master Plan, the following chapters set forth numerous ideas that can be taken on by local community-oriented non-profits, Block Groups, local business owners, individual residents, and other stakeholders who have demonstrated their willingness and capacity to become a partner in making a brighter future for the City of Hamtramck. These "Do-It-Yourself" recommendations identify a role for the community to take part in making improvements that do not require extensive capital, long-term planning, or other resources beyond the reach of community members.



#### Local Brilliance

The Hamtramck Master Plan process created several opportunities for members of the community to contribute their ideas for local improvements—opportunities that were well utilized by Hamtramckans, resulting in a wealth of brilliant ideas and sound reasoning. While the Master Plan was certainly a community-driven process overall that reflects the needs and desires of the community, the "light bulb" icon appears next to recommendations that were directly inspired by community members.

Throughout the recommendations section and the existing conditions analysis, one finds scores of cartoon speech and thought bubbles containing quotes taken directly from the mouths of Hamtramckans, whether from an insight or idea posted to the online map, from a focus group, one-on-one interview, public meeting feedback, or any other method the Master Plan team used to engage and listen to the community. The voices of Hamtramck were heard throughout the Master Plan process, and their words are carried through to the final document as a testament to their invaluable input and its importance to the formulation of the themes and recommendations of the following chapters.



ENSURE THAT HAMTRAMCK IS CLEAN AND SAFE FOR RESIDENTS, EMPLOYEES AND VISITORS. VISUALLY EXPRESS HAMTRAMCK'S UNIQUE CHARACTER, DIVERSITY AND VIBE THROUGH AN ATTRACTIVE PUBLIC REALM.

The look and feel of a City speaks volumes about its identity and potential. A clean, safe, attractive and distinctive public realm builds local pride and communicates confidence to the outside world. Business owners, investors and residents alike are drawn to cities that are clean, well managed and welcoming. For this reason, many have expressed a need to strategically improve the "basics" in Hamtramck, from better lighting to cleaner and greener streets. Not surprisingly, the second most prominent theme that emerged from the collaborative mapping exercises was that of the City's image and the visual impact of specific locations, both of which translate directly to quality of life and public realm issues. This chapter includes recommendations targeted toward reducing litter and illegal dumping, expanding tree coverage, creatively managing vacant properties, physically improving the main entrances to Hamtramck, and expanding the capacity of block clubs to effectively tackle many of these concerns with City support.

#### 1.1

## MAKE AN IMPRESSION AT GATEWAYS TO THE CITY

The City of Hamtramck is a little "rough around the edges" in the literal sense. A vibrant and welcoming city at its heart, many of the perimeter areas are less attractive and offer little visual encouragement to venture further into Hamtramck. Entering the City by turning onto Campau from Hamtramck Drive, by exiting Interstate 75 North onto Nagel Street, or by crossing over Interstate 75 on Caniff Street, visitors to the city are greeted by three "Welcome To Hamtramck" signs. That is to say, they *might* be greeted by the signs if they happen to notice them-two of them are too small for the job, dwarfed by the scale of their settings, and the third is lost to the eye, camouflaged in a clutter of commercial signage and street infrastructure. However, while simply replacing the signs with gigantic signs or conspicuous signs might make them more noticeable, that wouldn't necessarily make them better gateways to the City. None of the signs seem to actually belong to Hamtramck-they are relatively anonymous and do no justice to the very "Hamtramckness" of Hamtramck. This first set of recommendations presents conceptual visions for improving Hamtramck's gateways and thinking of them as not just a places to say "welcome," but as places that are welcoming, simultaneously conveying the character of Hamtramck, its unique identity, its diverse communities, and its rich history.

Gateway improvements emerged as a prevalent theme in the insights and ideas the community contributed to collaborative maps used as public input tools. Transforming Hamtramck's gateways has the potential to improve perception of the city and increase awareness of the city as a place worth discovering [thereby increasing visitorship 14 WHEN YOU STEP INTO HAMTRAMCK, YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT CITY. !!

and local spending]. The process by which the gateways are conceived and created has the potential to engage the public in local decision-making and galvanize closer relationships between the City, residents, and local artists. The following ideas are intended to serve as provocations rather than literal designs; it is hoped that the City will initiate a collaborative process by which the creative community of Hamtramck would work with residents, neighborhood groups, and business owners in small teams to envision transformations of the primary entry points into the City of Hamtramck. While only the major entrances as defined by traffic volumes and visibility are discussed here, the intent is to also apply this collaborative process to other critical entrances to Hamtramck including the west side of Holbrook, the south side of Conant, and the north side of Conant.

## **1.1.1** Improve the North Campau Gateway





2008 traffic counts show that the stretch of Campau between Caniff and Carpenter gets the highest volume of surface street traffic in Hamtramck, suggesting that the Campau gateway into the city at Carpenter should be a top priority for gateway improvements in Hamtramck. With its four corners currently anchored by a vacant building, two parking lots, and an auto-related business, the intersection of Campau and Carpenter does little to welcome those entering the City from the north. Investments in the public realm would not only make a better gateway, they could also catalyze more private investment in this underutilized stretch of Hamtramck's primary commercial corridor.

Proposed short term and long term streetscape and right of way improvements on Campau from Caniff to Carpenter [3.1.2] would have a great impact on improving this gateway into Hamtramck. Additional short term improvements specific to this northernmost section of Campau could include pedestrianscale light installation [which could also help to address problematic illegal activities community members have identified at this corner, tree plantings in the open tree trench along Carpenter on the south west corner, murals, and sidewalk enhancements along the new Michigan State Department of Human Services building's Campau frontage. The crosswalk provides an additional opportunity for creative welcoming, and could be transformed using thermoplastic insets [3.3.3] to create a multilingual threshold to this global city. Potential improvement opportunities and conceptual visions for specific gateway improvements are shown in Figure 2.





2. North Campau gateway improvements





Above: Diagram of opportunities for improving the Carpenter and Campau gateway. Top: potential mural treatment to help welcome residents and guests.

## **1.1.2** Improve the South Campau Gateway



The location of the current "Welcome to Hamtram-ck" sign, on the northeast corner of Campau and Hamtramck drive, makes an excellent site for a more creative "monumental" gateway tied to Hamtramck's identity, as suggested in Figure 3. The conceptual sketch borrows the idea of an automotive-themed sculptural column from an actual sculpture that was a major pop art roadside tourist attraction in Berwyn, Illinois until it was removed in 2008 to accommodate the site's redevelopment.

On both sides of the rail underpass, Campau is flanked by an abundance of vacant land and slack spaces associated with the rail line. While many of







**3.** South Campau gateway improvements

Left: Diagram illustrating potential improvements to Campau's southern gateway, which include bicycle lanes, landscaping and public art. Top: A rendering of these potential improvements including the "Car-Kabob" to pick up on the City's auto legacy.

these lots should certainly be considered opportunity sites for new development, an interim strategy is necessary to complete the transformation of this entrance into the city, thereby also improving the marketability of these sites and others on the south side of Hamtramck. Low-cost landscape improvements, as well as more costly streetscape elements such as a planted median, should be considered.

The rail overpass on the south end of Campau at Denton makes for a visually unpleasant gateway into Hamtramck from south of the City. A creative approach to improved lighting under the underpass is proposed in section [3.5.2].

### **1.1.3** Improve the West Caniff Gateway

The Caniff bridge over I-75 was recently given a facelift, with a repaved roadway, new sidewalks, decorative paving patterns, cobra-style street lights, and a new fence. While the improvements have certainly given this very prominent gateway a much cleaner appearance, some attention could be paid to soften and enhance the character of the gateway in order both convey the spirit of Hamtramck and to create a more welcoming environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. A number of possible public realm improvements should be considered:

> The former BASF site is one of the City's target brownfield redevelopment sites, as well as a significant gateway presence on Caniff west of I-75. It is hoped that redevelopment scenarios include active frontage on Caniff and streetscape enhancements. In the short term, however, this large and highly visible vacant lot could be made less unsightly through the use of temporary landscape improvements. Seeding a wildflower meadow, shown in Fig 9, or simply planting along the fence edge, would be a high-impact, low-cost interim strategy to improve the negative visual impacts of this lot and the experience of entering the City on Caniff.



**4.** West Side gateway improvements

Diagram of potential improvements to the City's western gateway at Caniff Street. An essential part of the idea is to improve the City's visibility from I-75.

### WEST SIDE GATEWAY IMPROVEMENTS

- Permanent landscape improvements
- Temporary landscape improvements
- >>> Shared bike lanes
- Bike/pedestrian path
- Tree plantings
- Existing advertising opportunity
  - Potential advertising opportunity

> Though the Caniff bridge is looking much better these days, it could be further improved to enhance the public realm through a number of means. Hamtramck's creative community could be tapped to make use of public art installation opportunities along the bridge, on its fence, or on the landscaped shoulder on the southeast side of the bridge. Pedestrian-scale lighting should be added to the existing cobrahead light poles on the Caniff bridge to improve night visibility for [and drivers' vision]

of] pedestrians and bicyclists travelling along the planned Hamtramck bikeway. Street lamp banners and bollards along the sidewalk on the bridge's south side would add some color and make pedestrians feel more comfortable walking along this high-traffic corridor.

> The gas station on the southeast corner of Caniff and Nagel currently has an excessive number of curb cuts, which is both detrimental to the pe-

destrian environment and creates an unsightly visual presence upon entering the city—an uninterrupted expanse of pavement punctuated by small islands of sidewalk and grassy areas. Empty tree trenches on both sides of the gas station at Caniff and Nagel could be utilized to green this hardscape with scale-appropriate street trees and decorative plantings. Removing the two curb cuts nearest the corner at the gas station would create a continuous sidewalk space that improves both the appearance and walkability of the corner, as well as creating a safer and more accessible bus stop on Caniff. In general, it is hazardous to have curb cuts so close to the corner—the chaos of unpredictable turns into and out of the gas station may have something to do with the high frequency of car accidents at the intersection of Nagel and Caniff [SEMCOG identifies it as the highest accident frequency intersection in Hamtramck]. Extending the brick knee wall behind the new continuous sidewalk space at the corner would provide visual relief from the expanse of concrete created by the gas station, and could also create a more visually impactful surface for a literal "welcome" sign.

> The west-facing building facades east of Nagel on Caniff could be explored as mural opportunity sites that could be utilized to creatively welcome visitors.

## **1.1.4** Improve the I-75 Gateway at Nagel and Dequindre





A balkanized triangle of grass bounded by Dequindre, the Yemans I-75 overpass connector, and Chrysler Drive currently serves as the home to a humble "Welcome to Hamtramck" sign. Hamtramck's Midtown Block Club has recently completed some minor landscaping projects, which they hope to accompany with further improvements, pending

necessary resources and permissions from the City. Short term improvement scenarios should leverage block club participation and city resources to improve the landscaping with perimeter tree plantings, decorative plantings in the existing planters, and a plan for regular maintenance.

A long-term solution to improving this fragmented slack space as a striking gateway and removing duplicative infrastructure may be to close the Yemans Street overpass to vehicle traffic, making it a pedestrian and bike connection providing access across I-75. The connection would allow pedestrians and cyclists to avoid heavy traffic volumes on Caniff and provide a continuous cross-city bike route on shared lanes on Yemans and Belmont [3.4.2]. Greening the bridge with trees on either end and plantings along the edge would make this verdant path visible to the thousands of cars that pass under it every day, making it a valuable marketing and image-making opportunity for the City, as shown in Figure 6.





#### 5. I-75 Gateway Garden

Illustration of potential enhancements to the current "Gateway Garden". Closing Yemens in this area would unite the two small triangles into one larger plaza that includes a bike path, landscaping and repurposed cable spools for play equipment.

Additionally, this would eliminate the segment of Yemans currently bisecting the "Gateway Garden," which would more than double its area and make it a usable public open space. The Gateway Garden is re-envisioned in Figure 5 as a new occupiable landscape paying homage to the remnants of Hamtramck's industrial heritage, in this case repurposing large cable spools as play structure elements. Pedestrian-scale lighting, bollards and planters to separate the park from vehicular traffic, and highly visible crosswalks on Dequindre and Chrysler Drive [paired with HAWK signals] should be considered important public safety elements of the redesign.

## **1.1.5** Make Improvements to the I-75 Shoulder, Underpasses, and Offramps

Given the City's goal of strengthening Hamtramck's image as a local destination, it is important that the City consider how it presents itself to the thousands of people who pass by it on I-75 on a daily basis. While the combined estimated daily car counts of both service drives near Caniff and the western Caniff Street entrance is about 16.800 cars [according to 2008 SEMCOG traffic counts], approximately 150,000 vehicles pass by Hamtramck every day on I-75. So, while it's important to improve public perception of Hamtramck for those already en route to entering the City [as addressed in the above gateway recommendations], it's equally important to consider the potential impact improvements visible from the interstate could have on perception of the city for those who are simply passing by. Ultimately, improving the visual experience of passing Hamtramck on I-75 has the potential to boost visitorship and local spending. At present, there are no visual indicators that tell I-75 travelers they are passing the City of Hamtramck aside from the standard interstate signage, which is easily missed by travelers who aren't looking for it. A few very simple and low-cost treatments could make





**6.** *I-75 Edge Treatments* 

Potential improvements designed to elevate the City's presence on I-75.

the City's presence on I-75 stand out. Painting the underpasses a bright and eye-catching color and seeding native wildflowers on top of the retaining walls could enliven the landscape, making it more inviting to potential visitors, and providing visual cues that there is something beyond the wall worth checking out.

A creative transformation of this shoulder area could reinterpret the "welcome" sign as a highly place-specific object, taking some of the unique elements of Hamtramck and putting them on display to pique the curiosity of the greater Detroit Metro area. The conceptual welcome sign in Figure 6 takes aesthetic inspiration from Hamtramck Disneyland, arguably one of the City's best attractions; while it requires insider knowledge to find the resident-built alley installation, a gateway tribute to this one-of-a-kind hidden spectacle would promote the City's image at a highly visible location.

While there are a few trees dotted along the I-75 service drives, additional short-term greening of the offramp entrances into the city would transform the experience of arriving in Hamtramck. Canopy tree plantings along both sides of Chrysler Drive and along Dequindre and Nagel would lend a tree-lined boulevard quality to these service drives, which currently provide a very unceremonious greeting to visitors. The trees would also create a pleasant green buffer between the neighborhood and the hard edge of the below-grade vehicular artery, thereby reducing its negative visual impacts and the impact of high traffic flow noise levels on the adjacent neighborhood areas. An added benefit of street trees would be the natural slowing of speeders as they enter the City.

The two existing billboards along I-75, as well as a third potential location [4.6.1], present an additional opportunity for image-making and local promotion.

#### 1.2

#### TAKE OUT THE TRASH

Trash and illegal dumping were identified by community members as major quality of life issues that negatively impact both community pride and outside perception of the City of Hamtramck. Keeping Hamtramck clean is an initiative that requires cooperation and collective effort. City Hall, the Recreation Department/Commission, the Hamtramck DDA, local schools, residents, business owners, local enforcement agents, and other members of the community alike must contribute to this initiative in order to successfully maintain the cleanliness of the public realm. The strategies outlined below provide a number of both short term and long term ideas that can be implemented by various community agents to achieve the goal of cleaner streets and public spaces in Hamtramck.

### **1.2.1** Proactively Enforce Cleaner Streets





The widely-accepted broken windows theory of social behavior holds that a chaotic environment sends a subconscious message that no one is watching and encourages other criminal activity. By that token, keeping the streets clean in Hamtramck is just as much a critical public safety and crime prevention strategy as it is a quality of life concern. Many community members expressed frustration that very little is being done to enforce anti-litter and illegal dumping laws in Hamtramck. It is critical that the Hamtramck Police Department recognize that though it is a minor offense, littering and illegal dumping must be addressed through proactive ticketing and issuing of fines. Known dumping sites should become regular stops on neighborhood

11 JUST SNAP WHEN I SEE SOMEONE THROW A BURGER KING BAG OUT THE WINDOW—NOT ONLY DO I WISH I HAP A CANNON ON MY CAR, I REALLY WISH I WAS A COP SO I COULP DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!

patrol routes as well. Ticketing for casual littering is an impractical task to accomplish from behind the wheel of the squad car. Increased on-foot and bike patrols in parks, public spaces, and streets with higher pedestrian volumes would help prevent people from throwing trash on the ground, as well as increase public safety.

Community members must also assume greater responsibility for litter prevention. In addition to recommendations in [2.9.3] regarding 3-1-1 community liaisons [an improved method of managing and following up on reports of illegal dumping], residents should encourage each other to confront casual litterbugs caught in the act face-to-face.

### 1.2.2 Provide Trash Cans at Strategic Locations





Funding should be pursued and directed toward increasing the number of city-managed trash receptacles on streets and public spaces with regular pedestrian traffic and at bus stops. While a greater initial expense, solar self-compacting trash cans would reduce maintenance costs over time and should be considered for major streets and high foot traffic areas in Hamtramck. An additional benefit of solar trash cans is the positive impact they have on the image of the city—they make a statement about Hamtramck's values about sustainability and energy efficiency. This is a powerful imagemaking statement that would likely help promote visitorship and long-term residency in Hamtramck.

Public engagement sessions revealed that certain areas tend to accumulate more trash than others. The segments of Joseph Campau north of Caniff and south of Holbrook, Conant, Carpenter, Holbrook, Veteran's Park, and Hamtramck Town Center would make good candidates for investments in more frequent or improved trash receptacles. These locations are also high-visibility areas where such improvements would have a positive impact on the image of the City.

## **1.2.3** Institute an Adopt-A-Can Program









Alternative means of providing more public trash cans should also be explored, given the financial constraints of the City. As suggested by a local resident, businesses could provide or "adopt" public trash cans, and ensure that the bags are removed from the cans on trash day and placed on the curb for pick-up. Business owners would also be responsible for re-lining the cans with plastic bags after trash pick-up. Though it places a small cost and labor burden on business owners, the benefit of having a cleaner sidewalk in front of the store could improve foot traffic on commercial streets. Business owners may also discover that their own dumpsters may accumulate less trash if passersby utilize public receptacles instead of commercial dumpsters.

WIT WOULD BE FANTASTIC TO HAVE GARBAGE CANS IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS BUT THE DPW PROBABLY CAN'T MANAGE TO CONSTANTLY EMPTY THEM. PERHAPS BUSINESSES COULD MANAGE THEM? !!

II INMATE CREWS WHO ARE SUPPOSED TO BE CLEANING ON SATURDAY MORNING DON'T ACTUALLY DO ANYTHING! IF THEY ARE DOING COMMUNITY SERVICE, THEY SHOULD BE MONITORED AND FORCED TO ACTUALLY DO WORK. 77

### **1.2.4** Make Full Use of Free Clean-Up Resources







In addition to resident volunteers, community leaders need to ensure that community service workers and prison work crews are being properly managed to make sure they're actually picking up trash during clean-up outings. Making use of these free resources would reduce the burden on municipal services, residents, and business owners.

## **1.2.5** Mobilize Neighborhood Clean Ups





On Hamtramck's annual "Clean Sweep Day," volunteers take part in a city-wide clean up. The City provides dumpsters for the day to collect the trash swept by volunteers. While the event makes for a clean start to the spring each year, the City could support additional resident-driven clean-up initiatives that would establish a more constant resident stewardship of the cleanliness of streets. The City should consider providing additional resources to incentivize and encourage more regular neighborhood clean ups organized through block clubs or other neighborhood groups. Using competition to inspire efforts, the City could offer awards [free onehour parking vouchers, block parties with donated food items from local businesses, etc.] for neighborhood groups that collect the most trash, clean the largest area, or sort the most recyclables.

## **1.2.6** Creatively Discourage Illegal Dumping

When asked to identify on a map what parts of town get hit with the most litter and illegal dumping, scores of residents rushed to point out the corner of Commor and Lumpkin. With sizeable vacant lots on two of the corners of this intersection. there are a limited number of eyes providing surveillance in the area-illegal dumpers feel free to deposit their garbage bags, unwanted sofas, and broken toilets here. There is actually a trash can at this corner, but it seems one would need a sizeable trash can to contain all of the junk the corner tends to accumulate. While an ideal solution would be infill residential development on the lots, an interim strategy to improve and program the lots may work to deter potential illegal dumpers from proceeding with their dirty deeds. Planting a wildflower meadow or setting up raised planter beds for community gardening here would make a positive visual presence in the neighborhood, as well as make litterers think twice before throwing trash in a nice garden. To further activate the site, bringing more natural surveillance to the corner, temporary installations could also be an opportunity to support the creative community and establish temporary venues for arts and cultural development. The conceptual rendering envisions a shipping container retrofitted for use as an art gallery, for example, which could easily be moved to other locations or events. This vacant lot and others that often serve as dumping grounds could take a cue from Hamtramck Disneyland and become creative "roadside spectacles."



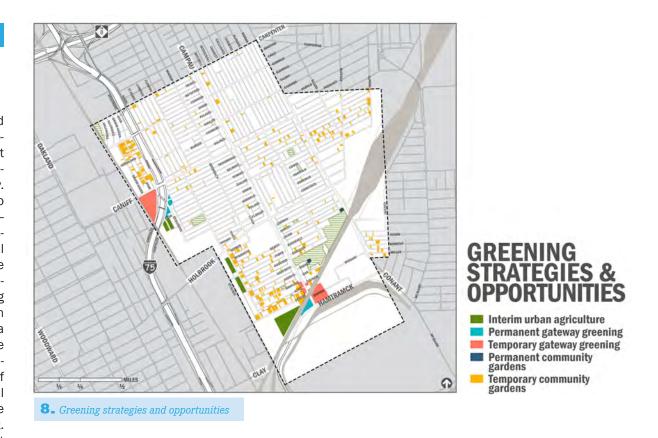


**7** • "Art-I-Tainer" temporary vacant lot installation

The "Art-I-Tainer" is a concept for a mobile art gallery that brings attention to the local arts and serves as a means of providing activity on vacant lots that are often trash strewn.

## EXPAND VACANT LAND MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

Hamtramck is fortunate to have not experienced the degree of abandonment and loss of urban fabric that is now evident in many areas of Detroit, but vacant land is nevertheless a predominant element of the landscape in certain parts of the City. Larger swaths of vacant land are found closer to the perimeter of the City and along the rail lineunfortunately, the very locations that are most visible to those entering the City. In recent years, local community-based non-profit organizations have begun to address the issue of vacant land management with basic land care weeding and seeding operations. An expansion of current efforts, both in terms of vacant land management coverage area and level of improvement to vacant lots, could have a powerful impact on perception and marketability of Hamtramck. Figure 8 puts forth a range of greening strategies and suggests which potential greening opportunity sites in Hamtramck might be best suited for each particular greening treatment. In addition to proposed investments in permanent improvements to gateway locations with limited development potential [1.1], other types of vacant land management treatment of a given lot should take into account the opportunities and constraints presented by its context, scale, and anticipated developability:



#### 1.3.1 Support Interim Urban Agriculture







Some vacant sites are large enough to enable reuse for commercial urban agriculture. By securing the site, commercial operators often use a mix of raised bed planters and covered greenhouses to compensate for site contamination concerns and grow a range of produce and plants. For these operations to be viable and attractive to a commercial operator, they should not be expected to be devel-

oped for other uses in the next 10 years. The primary opportunity for this reuse approach is around industrial lands and infrastructure where vacant land could be transformed from an eyesore to an attractive and productive buffer.

#### 1.3.2 Make Temporary Low-Cost Improvements to Development **Opportunity Gateway Sites**





Recommendations regarding gateway improvements described earlier in this chapter discuss the potential use of low cost and low maintenance native wildflower seeding to help improve the appearance of highly visible vacant land located along entryways into Hamtramck. Gateway locations should be considered high-priority vacant land management target areas among the many potential opportunity sites for greening.

#### 1.3.3 Link Aspiring Green Thumbs with Community Gardening Space







The pattern of compact residential lots in Hamtramck, many of which have rear garages occupying rear vard space, results in a high proportion of homes with very limited space for gardening. Additionally, many of the renter-occupied housing units [which account for about half of Hamtramck's housing, according to the 2000 Census] are likely to involve either shared yard spaces and/or landlord restrictions on yard alteration projects.

With an abundance of small vacant lots in Hamtramck, there is plenty of opportunity for scattered site small community gardening projects. These sites, shown in yellow in Figure 8, would ideally ultimately become residential infill development sites. In the meantime, the City should make efforts to facilitate small-scale community gardening by linking aspiring community gardeners with underutilized neighborhood lots. In addition to the benefit of providing outdoor space to fulfill the needs of residents





9 Low-cost vacant lot treatments

A potential wildflower garden and landscaping improvements along the edge of the BASF site could be done simply, cheaply and by community members with City support.



#### **PRECEDENT**

The idea isn't a new one: willing gardeners in the United Kingdom can be matched with available space using an online landsharing networking site called Landshare, created by the United Kingdom public service television broadcaster, Channel 4. The City of Hamtramck could follow suit by hosting a similar networking function on the City of Hamtramck's website, or on a local communitybased non-profit website, such as Preserve our Parks or Hamtramck Community Initiative.

http://landshare.channel4.com

who would otherwise not have access to a gardening area, neighborhood community gardening has the potential to help stabilize and strengthen real estate values in areas where the urban fabric has deteriorated and higher vacancy rates threaten to spread. Additionally, community gardening provides an excellent opportunity to engage youth in neighborhood improvement and environmental education.

In 2009, the City of Hamtramck initiated a program that allows residents to establish community gardens on vacant lots owned by the City. During the master planning process, community members suggested that the City make efforts to increase awareness of the program by creating a brochure to promote and explain the details of the program. Additionally, the City should consider adding a community gardening opportunity site mapping feature to its website along with contact and support information related to the program. The City of Hamtramck could also host a networking function on the City of Hamtramck's website, or on a local community-based non-profit website, such as Preserve our Parks or Hamtramck Community Initiative.

Larger vacant or underutilized land, as well as slack spaces in large parks, also present an opportunity to establish larger community gardening projects with multiple plots and shared resources such as gardening tool sheds and water access. Potential permanent community garden locations highlighted in Figure 8 are discussed as a component of parks and recreational programming [6.3.3].

## **1.3.4** Create Partnerships with Established Greening Organization





Cultivating a green culture takes coordination, commitment and resourcefulness. Fortunately, many other organizations have paved the way for others to follow their lead. There is no need for Hamtramck to "go it alone" with their greening initiatives but, instead, learn from the myriad organizations systematically tackling the issues associated with creatively managing vacant land in Detroit. Block Clubs, local non-profits, and the City should form strategic partnerships with organizations like the Greening of Detroit to share information, provide awareness and advocacy around greening and urban agriculture, offer greening workshops to residents and undertake joint projects that bridge the boundaries between Detroit and Hamtramck.

#### **PRECEDENT**

The Seed Detroit project works to spread the Urban Prairie throughout Detroit's vacant lots. The project organizes wildflower seeding and also provides templates for do-it-yourself projects.

The Greening of Detroit's mission is to "guide and inspire the growth of a 'greener' Detroit through planting and educational programs, environmental leadership, advocacy, and by building community capacity." They work collaboratively with community partners in Detroit, Hamtramck, and Highland Park to plan, implement, and maintain plantings on public property. These plantings range from "peas to trees" and include street trees, tree and plant nurseries, orchards, greenways, park improvements, neighborhood beautification initiatives, and schoolyard habitats.

The Garden Resource Program supports urban gardening and agriculture in Detroit, Hamtramck, and Highland Park. The program provides support to over 875 urban gardens and farms located at homes, schools and in the community through resources that include seeds, Detroit-grown plants, and technical assistance from a network of growers and urban agriculture advocates.



#### 1.4

# DEMOLISH ABANDONED AND DANGEROUS STRUCTURES

Some vacant buildings have yet to experience significant deterioration. These structures are great candidates for stabilization and future rehabilitation. Others represent safety hazards that often become targets for illegal dumping, dwellings for squatters and transients, breeding grounds for vermin, and ideal locations away from the public eye for illegal activities. They also have increasingly negative effects the City's image and on neighboring home values as they slowly deteriorate, threatening to create more abandonment in areas nearby. The City should identify a priority demolition schedule for those structures beyond repair keeping in mind the following criteria.

## **1.4.1** Prioritize High-Impact Areas in Hamtramck



In developing a strategy to prioritize the demolition of structures beyond repair, Hamtramck should focus on high impact areas including parcels surrounding parks, structures that are particularly dangerous, and parcels in areas where land assembly is a matter of interest for programs like NSP or the development of infill affordable housing.



Areas in Detroit on Hamtramck's northern border are in need of targeted demolition.

#### **1.4.2** Recommend Priority Tear-Downs in Neighboring Areas of Detroit



Abandoned and dangerous structures just outside of Hamtramck's municipal boundary are abundant, especially in areas directly north of Hamtramck. This likely has an impact on safety and the perception of safety in Hamtramck's neighborhood streets within walking distance of Detroit, as evidenced by the public realm issues mapping exercise. A high percentage of the houses in blocks north of

Hamtramck are lacking roofs, have sustained extensive structural damage from fire, and are very likely unsalvageable. With the goal of maintaining its own public safety, Hamtramck should take it upon itself to create a list of priority tear-downs in areas of Detroit adjacent to Hamtramck and coordinate with the City of Detroit to address this critical public safety issue. Hamtramck should then share the list with the City of Detroit, the Detroit EDC, and any other entities that may be helpful in addressing the issue across the border. This may require establishing a Michigan Corridor Improvement Authority [CIA] to bring Detroit and Hamtramck to the table to address this problem.

#### 1.5

## IMPROVE THE CITY'S TREE CANOPY

In addition to the quality of life and public realm benefits of street trees, they are an integral part of helping Hamtramck become a more environmentally sound community. An expanded urban forest would improve the currently inadequate management of stormwater, helping to mitigate the frequent flooding of neighborhood streets and park spaces. Getting a little more green on the streets of Hamtramck would also help to reduce the urban heat island effect, significantly reducing costs of cooling buildings throughout the City. The planting of street trees is known to have a significantly positive impact on home values, a fact that homeowners should be made aware of in order to reverse anti-tree sentiments heard during the Master Plan process and recruit participants in street tree planting and maintenance programs.

At present, Hamtramck's tree cover percentage falls far below that of neighboring communities in the Greater Detroit Area and leaves much room for improvement. The following strategies to increase the City's tree canopy should be taken into consideration.

#### **1.5.1** Adopt a Tree Ordinance







Having a city tree ordinance is an eligibility requirement for some potential funding sources for increasing Hamtramck's tree canopy, including an urban tree grant from DTE Energy, which reports that it has planted more than 20 million trees in Michigan since 1995. The tree ordinance should address proper placement and planting methods

MITHE ENTIRE EAST SIDE OF THE CITY NEEDS TO BE CLEARED OF TREES THAT WERE DAMAGED IN A TORNADO MORE THAN 10 YEARS AGO. ??

for street trees, outline maintenance roles, and identify preferred and prohibited species of trees for street plantings.

## **1.5.2** Conduct a City-Wide Tree Inventory





The City estimates that in recent years, Hamtramck has lost nearly 500 trees to a disastrous tornado, high winds, ice storms, and disease. Many of these dead and irreversibly unhealthy trees remain standing in tree pits across the City, but maybe not for long. Dead trees and trees in poor health pose a major public safety and liability issue, as falling branches and toppling trees can cause considerable injury to people and damage to homes and vehicles. The City should take early action and proactively remove dangerous street trees, eliminating the threat of incident. Conducting a City-wide tree inventory will identify trees that require immediate attention.

Contract a professional arborist to document and digitize detailed, tree-specific information about Hamtramck's street trees and other trees in the public realm [on school grounds, municipal facilities, parks, and so on]. Species, age, health, canopy height, canopy diameter, and other characteristics should be collected and recorded for each tree in the city. Use of tree inventory software that features georeferencing capabilities should ensure the easy portability and compatibility of the tree inventory data for future use. The formation of an inventory





**10.** Loss of street trees on Gallagher

In the 1950s, the block of Gallagher between Casmere and Commor had a promising number of maturing street trees {above}. Unfortunately, this block today [below], has large gaps in the street tree coverage, partially due to the aftermath of Dutch Elm Disease. Top photo: Hamtramck Heritage Collection.

database will help generate a list of dangerous, unhealthy, or dead trees that should be removed immediately and will also provide the basis for a future tree planting plan. The process of surveying the City's existing trees is also a prime opportunity to simultaneously identify potential planting locations while out in the field collecting data.

#### 1.5.3 Adopt a Tree Planting Plan



Setting an achievable goal for improving the City's tree coverage is a preliminary step that will require tree inventory data to determine existing coverage, as well as some estimates of the City's capacity for additional tree plantings. The City of Detroit has set its tree canopy coverage goal at 28%, which is also the national average for existing tree coverage. Hamtramck's denser urban fabric will prove achieving this much tree coverage prohibitive. However, the City should set its own coverage goal and set annual benchmarks for increasing the City's tree canopy.

Tree planting was a very popular topic among comments posted to the online collaborative map. The Master Plan team compiled public input regarding tree planting opportunities and supplemented this information with additional potential opportunities both derived from orthoimagery and observed during the parcel survey. A number of preliminary tree planting target streets are proposed in Figure 11, symbolized by the primary goal planting trees along these streets would hope to achieve. As a starting point for further consideration, planting these target areas with an estimated capacity of 2,820 street trees would result in a 38% relative increase in canopy coverage, bringing the City's tree cover to 8.3%.1 While this would be a major accomplishment that would bring many benefits to the City and community, the City would have to remain committed to sustained tree planting efforts in order to



bring the City's tree coverage to a percentage on par with its neighbors.

In addition prioritizing planting locations, the tree planting plan should also address tree planting best practices to avoid some of the common criticisms associated with street trees in an urban setting, including sidewalk damage due to root spread and insufficiently wide sidewalks that have been further crowded by tree pits. Tree planting techniques must address these contextual sensitivities.

During the planning process, several Hamtramck residents raised the concerns of sidewalk damage from spreading tree roots. A general rule of thumb is that a tree's roots will spread as far out from the trunk as the reach of its branches. It makes sense to use appropriately sized street tree species given specific sidewalk widths and optimal dimensions/capacities of tree pits and trenches. Additionally, a variety of root barrier structures can be installed to protect adjacent sidewalks from root spread damage. The root barrier is not designed to simply constrain roots within an unnaturally small arearather, it directs roots downward, well under sidewalks and standard curb depths before spreading outward.

This estimate is based on a number of assumptions. Tree spacing was assumed to be 20 feet, a good standard for urban street trees. To account for curb cuts, driveways, and other immovable obstacles to tree plantings, it was assumed that only 30% of the potential locations could be plantable. 25-foot tree canopy diameters were assumed, reflecting the recommended selection of street tree species that will provide a full canopy.

The issue of limited opportunities for street tree planting on Hamtramck's narrow sidewalks was also a common concern raised by the community. A minimum four-foot clear pathway should be maintained for pedestrian access on sidewalks. If the prospect of installing a tree pit on any given sidewalk intrudes upon this minimum clearance, the sidewalk should not be considered for tree pits or trenches or any other greening strategy that would disrupt the continuous walkable surface of the sidewalk. The conceptual streetscape designs discussed in the transportation chapter of the Hamtramck Master Plan anticipate a narrowing of

the cartway in order to accommodate appropriatelysized sidewalk planting strips as well as adequate pedestrian zones. Thankfully, many of Hamtramck's existing road widths are so excessive, traffic, trees, bikes, and pedestrians can all be accommodated with just a simple redistribution of rightof-way space. As an alternative solution, the City should consider using tree bump-outs to increase tree coverage on streets with narrow sidewalks.

It should be noted that while General Hamtramck Homes also has especially poor tree cover, it is a good candidate for HOPE VI redevelopment, so it would not be a good use of limited funds to plant trees there in the short term. However, street trees plantings in longer-term public housing redevelopment plans would be necessary to improve street tree coverage in that sparsely canopied area of Hamtramck.

#### **1.5.4** Adopt a Tree Maintenance Plan





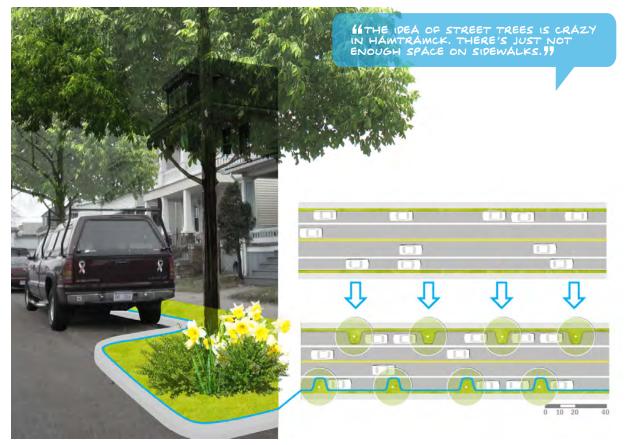






Trees planted in the public realm should be considered part of public infrastructure, and, as such, should be maintained and treated as an investment. Pruning should be done by trained individuals with experience in tree care. Increasing resident capacity to properly care for trees by offering training classes by a professional arborist may be a viable low-cost grassroots way of meeting this need.

LITHE CITY DOESN'T MANAGE THESE TREES AND THEY CAUSE THE PRIVATE SIDEWALKS TO BUCKLE AND BECOME IMPASSIBLE FOR MANY SENIORS. WHY CAN'T WE TAKE CARE OF WHAT WE HAVE?



#### **12.** Tree bump-outs

In addition to greening Hamtramck's streets, tree bump-outs would also work to slow down drivers on narrow streets, helping drivers avoid hitting parked cars.

#### 1.5.5 Encourage the Community to **Plant Trees**







In addition to community organization-led street tree planting initiatives, street tree planting initiatives could be encouraged and implemented through Block Clubs by raising awareness of the many benefits of the urban forest, as well as sharing information about street tree planting resources available locally. If one in three occupied homes in Hamtramck planted a tree in the yard [a total of 1817 trees], Hamtramck's tree canopy would be increased 1.5%, bringing its projected total tree coverage [in addition to priority street tree plantings proposed abovel to 9.8%.

## IMPROVE NIGHT VISIBILITY

The lack of a sufficient street and sidewalk lighting level of service in Hamtramck results in extremely poor night visibility. Given the high level of street activity in the evenings due to Hamtramck's wellfrequented bars and restaurants, the quality of the public realm at night is extremely important in terms of both the image of the City and public safety. Residents indicated that improving lighting was the second most important improvement for Hamtramck's parks. Additionally, at public input sessions, residents clearly indicated that there is

insufficient lighting on portions of Joseph Campau, Conant and Carpenter Streets. Not surprisingly, residents also indicated that these same areas also presented issues with regard to public safety. In response to these concerns, the City should work toward improving lighting throughout Hamtramck using the following to guide improvements:

#### 1.6.1 Prioritize Night Visibility Improvement Areas



The City, DDA and other partners should conduct a city-wide night visibility survey. The survey should result in the identification of some priority improvement areas likely including Veteran's Park, the Conant Street commercial corridor, the northern and southern segments of Campau, major gateways to the city, bus stops, underlit areas near nightlife destinations, and rail underpasses on the south side of town.

#### 1.6.2 Upgrade Lighting Infrastructure to Improve Efficiency





The existing City street lights require frequent maintenance but also do not provide optimal light levels for streets and sidewalks. Lighting with better light levels and coverage would help improve the perception of night time safety but would also likely reduce the large number of auto thefts in Hamtramck. As wholesale replacement of these lights is cost prohibitive, the City should evaluate options for incrementally upgrading fixtures with Light-Emitting Diode [LED] street lamps. This improvement would reduce the frequency with which bulbs would need to be replaced. LED bulbs is that they typically last up to 15 years—about five times longer than standard high pressure sodium bulbs.



TARGET STREET PLANTINGS ≈ 2820 TREES **TOTAL CANOPY INCREASE: 2.3% NEW CANOPY COVERAGE 8.3%** 



1-IN-3 OCCUPIED HOUSING PLANTINGS ≈ 1820 TREES **TOTAL CANOPY INCREASE: 1.5% NEW CANOPY COVERAGE 9.8%** 

LED lighting is also a brighter alternative, can be engineered to highlight the sidewalk thus reducing light pollution in the sky, and greatly reduces maintenance costs. Ann Arbor's replacement of downtown street lights with LED fixtures is expected to save the city \$100,000 a year in energy costs. With installation costs at about \$630,000, the street lights would theoretically pay for themselves in less than seven years. So, while upgrading fixtures to LED will require an upfront investment, those costs can be recouped from energy savings alone well within the life span of an LED fixture.

## **1.6.3** Establish a Resident-Assisted Neighborhood Lighting Improvement Program







To supplement street lighting, residential front vards and facades represent a more immediateterm opportunity to improve lighting and the overall night-time character the neighborhood streets. The City, local Block Clubs and their partners should explore the possibility of creating a residential facade and front yard improvement grant program to subsidize installation of new low-level LED fixtures either affixed to street-facing residential walls or free-standing in front yards. As LED lights require very little maintenance, the primary cost is related to the purchase of the fixture, which is often cheaper if bought in bulk, and installation. Solar LED fixtures should be used to eliminate complicated installation procedures, reduce costs and expand participation in the program. To make this program work effectively, a funding stream and an outreach campaign will need to be developed to encourage property owners to participate. The funding stream could include a mixture of public dollars and a private match by home and business owners the balance of which would need to be identified by both the level of public subsidy available for any given year and the level of interest by property owners.

#### **LIGHTEN UP**

After installing 25 LED lights along East Washington Street in 2006, Ann Arbor solicited community feedback to evaluate public sentiment regarding the change. Due to overwhelming support, Ann Arbor has since converted 600 LED lights in downtown.

Raleigh, North Carolina, became an officially recognized "LED City" in 2007 after installing LED lighting in a government parking garage. It has since installed them around the Convention Center and has plans to extend the lighting to other areas.

The City of San Antonio introduced the Place Light Upon Graffiti [PLUG] program in early 2010. The anti-graffiti program allowed residents and business owners in heavily-tagged areas to apply for solar-powered, motion-activated lights that would likely scare away vandals. The program was administered through the City's Housing and Neighborhood Services Graffiti Abatement Program with national anti-graffiti grant funding and additional funds from the City and utility and transit agencies.



USE TECHNOLOGY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITY UPGRADES TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF CITY SERVICES, MINIMIZE COSTS, RELIEVE STAFFING CONSTRAINTS, AND REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.

City budget shortfalls and staffing constraints are two of Hamtramck's most challenging issues. Nevertheless, some of Hamtramck's most important needs lie within the realm of public services and facilities. It will certainly be a financial and logistical difficulty to implement many of the recommendations in this chapter, but the results these ideas should achieve are paramount to making the City of Hamtramck safer, more efficient, more responsive to the needs of residents of all ages, and, in short, a better place to live, visit, and run a business.



#### **14.** Stormwater management infrastructure improvements

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Phase one, high-priority pipe reconstruction
- --- Phase two, secondary priority pipe reconstruction
- Additional Conant pipe egress
- Potential additional Conant pipe egress

#### 2.1

## EXPAND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

Community members have expressed their deep concern over the reoccurrence of flooded streets. schools, parks, and basements after storm events in Hamtramck, identifying regular flooding as a maior quality of life issue and threat to housing conditions in some parts of the City. The most ideal solution to solving Hamtramck's stormwater management issues would be to separate its sewer lines from stormwater drain pipes. However, the effectiveness of this would depend entirely on a decision by the City of Detroit to separate its own stormwater and sewer infrastructure as well, which is a highly unlikely prospect at this time or in the foreseeable future. Hamtramck is therefore faced with the challenge of reconstructing the underperforming parts of the combined sewer system. Given the age and condition of Hamtramck's combined sewer, and the overwhelming gap between the size of the City's budget and the projected costs of improving the system, it's critical that the City work towards solutions in two ways: by continuing to seek significant government funding to replace aging infrastructure underground and address stormwater management through lower-cost natural means.

Improving stormwater management at the ground level rather than simply relying on pipes underground to do the job is an initiative that, in order to be truly effective, must be taken on by both the City and the community. The City's role will be to provide positive examples of best stormwater management practices, and create both incentives for private improvements and disincentives to poor practices. The community will be relied upon to improve stormwater management on residential lots and local businesses.



Major storm events in Hamtramck have brought the issue of stormwater management to the forefront of the City's priorities.

## 2.1.1 Implement Planned Stormwater Management Infrastructure Improvements

Hamtramck's strategy to improve stormwater management infrastructure underground is to build a stormwater retention spine through the City, with significant rebuilding of pipes and infrastructure below Holbrook, Conant, Caniff Streets, and Lumpkin Streets. The City of Hamtramck's Department of Public Services has divided the necessary reconstruction of the system into high priority improvement and secondary priority improvement sections of these streets, as shown in Figure 13. For each section of streets indicated, the necessary improvements include upgrading the water main and service connections, replacing storm sewers, and, of course, reconstructing the street after the un-

derground infrastructure is replaced. The projected cost of high priority reconstruction is about \$10.5 million, with the total reconstruction cost at about \$28 million. In total, the stormwater management infrastructure upgrade project proposes to replace about four and a half miles of pipe, as well as adding three additional points of egress into the main 15-foot drainage pipe under Conant at Caniff, Holbrook, and either Casmere or Carpenter.

This much-needed project constitutes a massive undertaking for the City of Hamtramck and will require pursuit of outside funding, as well as close coordination with the City of Detroit to coordinate construction on Conant Street, as segments of it straddle the Hamtramck/Detroit municipal boundary. The complete reconstruction of some of Hamtramck's major streets [3.1.1] also serves as a major opportunity to integrate other streetscape improvements into the scope of the construction project, which would drastically reduce the cost of implementing streetscape improvements as a separate initiative and also reduce the interruptions to traffic patterns, businesses, and daily life caused by extensive construction projects.



The City of Philadelphia has created a "Homeowners Guide to Stormwater Management" to help residents reduce the strain on local infrastructure.

#### 2.1.2 Increase Awareness Of Stormwater Best Management Practices









The City should start by inviting a stormwater management consultant to educate the Planning Board, City Council, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and other city government entities with a role in planning and urban development about best stormwater management practices specifically tailored to highly urbanized areas where the ground has been extensively compacted over the course of the last hundred years or longer.

The City should also produce or make available educational materials to increase public awareness of DIY methods of improving stormwater management. A "Homeowner's Guide to Best Stormwater Management Practices" should highlight the ineffectiveness of traditional grass lawns for absorbing rain water; the benefits of having downspouts directing rainwater into rain gardens instead of into drainpipes; the advantages of using permeable pavers and permeable curbs to allow runoff to naturally percolate into the ground; the adverse effects of running a dishwasher or washing machine during storm events; and so on. It would also be worthwhile to hold a series of public presentations to educate community members about what they can do to prevent the annual flooding of their basements, and the importance of making a collective effort to have an effective impact on stormwater management-one house on each block adhering to best practices is just one less drop in the bucket, so to speak.

Setting policies, greening streets, and implementing underground infrastructural improvement projects are all necessary strategies that require immediate and sustained action, but it will take years for the effects of these efforts to be felt. By contrast,

a community-based, grassroots public awareness and education campaign geared to getting homeowners and business owners to understand the benefits of stormwater management best practices and make low-cost improvements to their own properties could have much more immediate effect, and with much lower cost to the City of Hamtramck. The City of Hamtramck should approach the City of Detroit and other neighboring municipalities, SEM-COG, and Wayne County about creating a partnership to sponsor the campaign, as the issue affects combined sewer systems that cross municipal lines and a coordinated approach to better stormwater management has the potential to improve the health of multiple watersheds in the area.

## **2.1.3** Toughen Zoning Landscaping Requirements









Setting policies today for a more sustainable urban environment tomorrow is a critical early-action item. After an initial phase of education about best stormwater management practices, Hamtramck's Planning Commission and Department of Community and Economic Development must recognize that establishing effective stormwater management practices in Hamtramck is very much within their realm of responsibility. Embedding landscaping requirements with more progressive stormwater management practices in Hamtramck's zoning ordinance would establish a more proactive stance on putting an end to the annual flooding of streets, parks, schoolyards, and basements in the City.

4 STORMWATER PRAINAGE IN THE CITY IS A MAJOR ISSUE. WE SHOULD BE GETTING PEVELOPERS TO HAVE MORE PROGRESSIVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN THEIR SITE PLANS. ??

The zoning requirements for new development on properties in the Residential District, which accounts for 57 percent of the parcelized area of Hamtramck, requires that each lot have a front yard depth of at least six feet and a rear yard depth of at least 30 feet. The code specifies that front yards over 100 square feet must be at least 50 percent landscaped, but does not have any minimum landscape requirement for the theoretically much larger back yard. The zoning requirements for this zoning category should set a minimum percent of permeable area for rear yards. This kind of requirement has some flexibility in its satisfaction: it could be satisfied by landscaped and planted areas, but if developers or new home builders prefer to keep a hardscape for patios or vehicle storage, they could incorporate permeable pavers or porous asphalt to count towards the permeable area percentage requirement. With the variety of today's many affordable permeable ground surface materials to choose from, it would not be unreasonable to set an aggressive requirement [at least 50 percent] for percent permeable surface in rear yards, as well as increase the landscaping requirement for front vards.

New developments situated in a Multiple Family Residential District are required to have a front vard at least twelve feet deep and a rear yard at least 20 feet deep. The Structure and Site Requirements state that "all unpaved areas of the lot shall be landscaped and maintained under Article IX, Section 9." Article IX, Section 9 specifies that front yards, side yards, and back yards are to be entirely landscaped, "except for those areas occupied by utilities, access driveways, paved walks, walls, and structures." The Section also stipulates that "no front yard shall be entirely covered in concrete or a concrete-like material," but this language would permit designs that provide almost no permeable area at all, as long as the paved areas are called "access driveways" or "paved walks." The zoning



Stronger requirements to handle stormwater on-site should be considered by the City in the review of development proposals.

language should be stronger and require permeable areas as a percent of yard area.

The Multi-Use District and Central Business District zones have no yard or setback requirements, nor do they have maximum lot coverage requirements. Additionally, the zoning codes do not specify that any unbuilt areas must meet any specific landscaping requirements. Therefore, development in Multi-Use and Central Business District zones may very well result in entirely impermeable areas. Development of this type is to be avoided, given the effect it has on runoff. The City should explore other options for urban commercial development guidelines that integrate more progressive stormwater management principles through a minimum percent permeable area requirement. A percent permeable area reguirement for the Multi-Use District zone could be satisfied through greening parking areas with tree

trenches and rain gardens with permeable curbs, as well as porous pavement or permeable pavers. However, unlike the Multi-Use District, the Central Business District does not require the provision of any parking spaces, so parking lot greening strategies are a less likely possibility for improving stormwater management practices of new development within this zone. For developments with high lot coverage ratios in either zone, provision of a green roof could count toward required permeable area. Alternatively, developers could construct rain gardens or tree trenches on the adjacent sidewalk to help manage runoff in lieu of dealing with stormwater on-site, as long as the site's grading plan or downspout design allows stormwater from the development in question to infiltrate these permeable areas. An additional option is to allow "greenwalls" instead of "screenwalls" to be provided at the front lot line for "all parking lots, vacant lots, and lots in the absence of a building façade." The zoning code specifies that a "screenwall" is to be constructed of brick, stone, or other masonry material, but a "greenwall," a thickly planted narrow landscaping strip, could achieve the same sense of separation from the sidewalk while also improving runoff capture on commercial corridors.

The Industrial Zone currently has no landscaping requirements but limits total building coverage to 50% of the property. The City should consider updating the code to include: a requirement that 20% of the property be landscaped with native plants and; a requirement that the site's primary entrance be landscaped and naturally screened from surrounding properties. All industrial sites should be encouraged to manage the 1<sup>st</sup> inch of rainwater on-site in line with stormwater management techniques outlined in this chapter.

The City of Hamtramck may also consider following the lead of other cities that have enacted tougher landscaping and stormwater management requirements for securing permits for larger new developments over a set minimum size. This ensures that new development that covers a large area doesn't create an excessive burden on already overstressed underground stormwater management infrastructure. They typically require that applications for larger developments provide detailed stormwater

management plans that demonstrate how the site's landscaped areas are designed to capture the first inch of rain water on-site during storms.

A site plan review process will need to be in place to ensure that new development will be in accordance with any stormwater best management practices the City decides to integrate in the zoning ordinance. While there is already an opportunity to enforce the fulfillment of landscaping and stormwater management requirements on a case-by-case basis through the process of site plan review for non-residential development, the review process would have to be expanded to include residential development as well, given that it covers the majority of the parcelized area of the City. Applicants in the permitting process must be able to describe in detail technical considerations of the landscape features and grading plans that demonstrate runoff flows and stormwater management features.

## **2.1.4** Use Public Facility Grounds to Set A Good Example







As a practical companion to a homeowner's guide to improved stormwater management, demonstration gardens would provide a more immersive approach to environmental education, giving visual examples of how things like rain gardens or rain barrels are actually installed and maintained and how they reduce the strain on underground infrastructure by slowing and retaining heavy rain volumes during storm events. Informational placards placed throughout the landscape installation could be used to explain the individual components of rain gardens function and provide useful information about installation and care. The City of Hamtramck should consider a number of locations for potential demonstration gardens, including schoolyard hardscapes, municipal parking lots, any of the city's park areas, high visibility street corners, and so on. The following sites may make particularly good locations for demonstration gardens:

- > Veteran's Park has especially poor drainage of rain water, and could certainly benefit from improved stormwater management. It would also be a great way to teach kids about the environment and sustainability. A high-visibility location near the Campau side of the park would be an excellent short-term improvement project to help bring more attention and users to the underutilized park.
- > Redirecting roof runoff from downspouts into rain gardens and bioswales at one or more major Hamtramck landmarks with larger than typical roofs, such as City Hall, the Public Library, Hamtramck High School, or St. Florian's Church,



#### PRECEDENT: FORD RIVER ROUGE COMPLEX, DEARBORN MICHIGAN

Built by Henry Ford in the 1920s, the Rouge Truck Manufacturing Complex was at the cutting edge of industrial efficiency worldwide. The Ford Motor Company decided to make it a model again in 2000, this time focused on sustainable manufacturing. The redevelopment includes a 10-acre green roof that can retain approximately 50% of stormwater runoff while lowering the building's energy costs. Runoff is recycled throughout the plant and on-site porous paving provides additional stormwater retention. The landscape design uses native plants and trees to remediate contaminated soils, treat pollutants, and provide valuable habitat for wildlife. The result is lower utility costs, less water entering the sewer system and better water quality in the Rouge River.

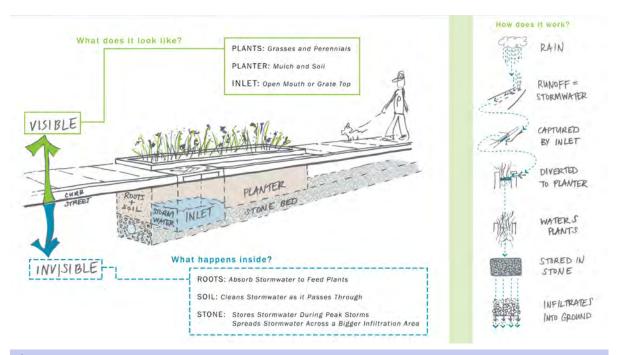
would not only greatly reduce the volume of runoff entering the City's combined sewer, they would also provide a highly visible examples of stormwater management methods.

- > Retrofitting the landscape surrounding the City's new splashpad at Pulaski Park so that water from the spray fountains flows naturally into rain gardens rather than directly into storm drains would be a fun and economical way to teach kids about making the best use of environmental resources.
- > Integrating a bioswale or rain garden in Zussman Park, directly across from City Hall, to capture runoff from adjacent streets would make a powerful statement about the City's new green agenda, as well as make more productive use of underutilized areas of the park.

#### **2.1.5** Green the Streets



Green infrastructure technologies such as rain gardens, bioswales, pervious pavements and tree pits and trenches help to restore the natural water cycle as well as provide social benefits that "grey infrastructure" cannot. Coordinating "green infrastructure" installation in tandem with the city's planned sewer line reconstruction projects would be a highly strategic means of reducing the construction cost of improving stormwater management at street level. Integrating green infrastructure in streetscape design would allow runoff to infiltrate the ground in a controlled but natural way, reducing the strain on the city's sewer system and directing runoff into the natural water cycle through the process of infiltration and evaporation/evapotranspiration. The City should initiate cost-benefit studies to determine ballpark construction cost figures and use anticipated benefits as an advocacy and fundraising talking point. As major streetscape improve-



15. Stormwater tree trench diagram courtesy of the Philadelphia Water Department's Office of Watersheds

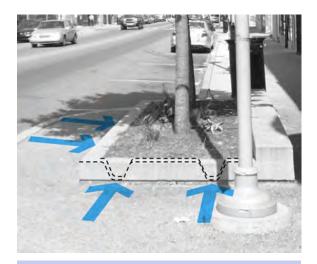
ment projects in the City begin to take shape, the City should ensure that engineers hired to design and implement the street reconstruction projects include a range of options to integrate progressive stormwater management best practices into the streetscape design.

In addition to the street tree planting guidelines [1.5.3], the following specific logistical concerns should be considered:

> A standard tree pit captures rainfall from the air space above it, as well as some amount of runoff that flows into it, but the ground below the tree is typically highly compacted and has very limited capacity to retain stormwater, which is a major limiting factor to maximizing its stormwater manage-

ment potential. Cities are starting to utilize more sophisticated tree pit and tree trench designs that are capable of capturing much larger volumes of runoff and convey any overflow into stormwater drain pipes. The designs require an integration of the tree pit with adjacent sewer pipes through a system of traps and retention chambers, which should be taken into consideration in coordinated green infrastructure/sewer reconstruction projects.

> Integrating the appropriate native plant species into site design and green infrastructure improvements provides many ecological benefits to the city of Hamtramck. The Sustainable Sites Initiative [SSI] put forth by the American Society of Landscape Architects defines "appropriate" plants as those species that are adapted to the regional climate, soil



Using permeable curbs could facilitate better stormwater management in the City.

conditions and rainfall volumes and are less susceptible to pests native to the region. Appropriate species require less maintenance and resources including water, pest control and fertilizer. More importantly, applied research has shown that utilizing native wetland plants in stormwater management applications are more suited to absorbing rain water, in part because their root systems are much more extensive than that of typical lawns. When selecting appropriate and native planting palettes. it is important to promote plant diversity to provide resistance to damage from pests and disease. The SSI provides a general guide for the diversity of plants on larger sites: "plant no more than 10 percent of any species, no more than 20 percent of any genus, and no more than 30 percent of any family." For smaller sites: "select species that contribute to the plant diversity of the community/region as a whole."

> The recently completed streetscape redesign of the middle segment of Campau might have been an excellent opportunity to improve the street's natural capacity to manage stormwater. There are several planted areas integrated in bumpouts and sidewalk areas, but the soil is above grade and the solid planter curbs prevent any sidewalk runoff from flowing into them. Future streetscape designs should place the soil level slightly below grade and use permeable curbs to protect planted areas from foot traffic while also allowing sidewalk runoff to flow into the planter. For planted areas located near buildings, geomembranes can be used to prevent water seepage from trenches, planters, and tree pits into basements.

> Low traffic, low-speed areas such as on-street parking, alleyways, and parking lots are ideal locations for porous asphalt. Porous asphalt requires no different mixing and application equipment that is required for standard asphalt paving, but its miniscule cavities allow water to naturally drain into the ground. In a study conducted by the University of New Hampshire<sup>1</sup>, porous asphalt was shown to reduce annual surface runoff by an average of 68%. Benefits, in addition to recharging groundwater and restoring natural drainage patterns, include the removal of 65-85% pollutants and up to 95% of sediment from runoff. With proper maintenance, which usually requires a surface sweeping treatment and inspection four times per year, porous asphalt can have a minimum service life of 20 years. Although maintenance costs for porous asphalt are more substantial than traditional asphalt pavement, savings are realized in reducing demand for storm sewers and municipal stormwater treatment. Of course, porous asphalt will only function properly if the impervious surfaces below it have been removed, which is of specific relevance in Hamtramck, where many streets have been resurfaced dozens of times over the past several decades. Therefore, major sewer reconstruction projects present an especially advantageous opportunity to make use of this stormwater management strategy. Porous asphalt is also an especially useful green infrastructure solution because it does not require additional street or sidewalk space, which is often in short supply on some of the narrower streets of Hamtramck.

Broadening the traditional definition of "infrastructure" beyond pipes, inlets, drains, and gutters, to include new types of capital improvements would require that these streetscape interventions be treated as public infrastructure and maintained to protect the value and effectiveness of public investment. This will require expanding the scope of DPW's contract with maintenance crews or making other arrangements for the ongoing stewardship of green infrastructure, potentially through partnerships with schools, local non-profits, block group organizations, the DDA, the Wayne County Jail, or others.

## 2.1.6 Consider Levying an Impervious Area Tax





Hamtramck is not the only U.S. city now being forced to deal with the double whammy of a century-old combined sewer and an insufficient budget to properly repair the city's stormwater management system. City officials should consider following the lead of hundreds of other cities who have imposed an impervious area tax to help generate revenues for infrastructure upgrades. An impervious area tax is actually a fee, usually charged on an annual basis for the service of removing stormwater from

46 HAMTRAMCK HAS A LOT OF UNUSED PAVED AREAS. SOME OF THEM ARE TECHNICALLY PARKING LOTS, SOME OF THEM NOT. ??

<sup>1</sup> http://www.unh.edu/erg/cstev/fact\_sheets/pa\_fact\_sheet\_08.pdf



Parking lots represent vast areas of impervious surface that sheds water into nearby streets during rain events.

streets and conveying it underground to a water treatment plant. Individual property owners pay the fee based on the amount of impervious area their property contains. In this system, property owners pay a premium for impervious hardscapes, and rightly so, as the paved-over lots divert more runoff into storm drains, and therefore are more responsible for the costs of stormwater infrastructure. While this policy may be politically challenging to introduce to the voting public, it has the potential to help solve Hamtramck's stormwater management crisis in two ways: it would both increase revenue streams to fund stormwater infrastructure improvements and encourage land owners to remove unnecessary paved area, thereby reducing runoff volumes and reducing the load on the City's aged and stressed pipe network. The City will inevitably have to find some way to fund the improvements, and, unlike the potential solution of mandating a millage for stormwater improvements, an impervious area

tax would not divert precious revenues from other already-lean City budgets.

Of course, the City must have in place a process of assessing impervious area for each parcel, a task that would require an improved parcel database and geographic information systems software [2.9.2]. To keep things simple, lawns, rain gardens, porous asphalt, green roofs, and so on could be equally counted as permeable area and remain untaxed. Those who know their stormwater trivia, however, are aware that typical grass lawns aren't actually much more permeable than a concrete surface. To truly account for and tax according to the degree of imperviousness, a more sophisticated assessment system could apply a permeability coefficient for the various categories of surface cover and tax them according to their specific ability to allow water to infiltrate the soil.

#### 2.2

## SET AN EXAMPLE FOR SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

While obviously it's an issue of particular concern in Hamtramck, dealing with stormwater management through natural means is just the tip of the iceberg of sustainable practices the City of Hamtramck could implement to help improve energy efficiency, stretch municipal dollars, and, more importantly, improve the environment. Hamtramck should strive to set an example for sustainable practices and become a model City for green thinking, an image-making initiative that could help attract and retain residents and businesses as well. The City of Hamtramck was recently awarded a \$98,000 Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant to fund an energy audit of City Hall, the Hamtramck Public Library, and the Fire Station, as well as cover some minor energy efficiency upgrades to municipal buildings, which is a great start. To keep the ball rolling, the City should consider a number of short and long term initiatives geared toward establishing more sustainable facilities and policies.

### **2.2.1** Shed Some Light on Being Green









The clock is ticking towards the deadline imposed by the federal government's Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, which requires that general purpose light bulbs be replaced with bulbs that are about 30% more efficient, an edict that will be phased in from 2012 to 2014. As it is likely that many public buildings will require new light fixtures, the City should take early action to better anticipate the impact this will have for municipal buildings, the better—the sooner replacements are made, the more quickly their efficiency savings will pay for the cost of installation. Given the City's budget constraints, phasing in light fixture replacements over time may be necessary, so starting early is a must.

## **2.2.2** Pave the Way for Green Development





The city should consider waiving fees or offering an expedited permitting process for developers who integrate green design features—reflective or green roofs, low-flow fixtures, recycled materials, energy-efficient appliances, and so on—in their proposed developments. It may be a small incentive to developers, but the policy would also function as a green building inventory mechanism, allowing the City to keep tabs on the kinds of sustainable design features developers are including in their projects—information that could be useful in marketing the City's green image or in providing an example to other developers who might be convinced to follow the lead of previous green developments.

## **2.2.3** Establish Regular Recycling Services in Hamtramck









Local community leaders have worked in recent years to establish the volunteer-based Hamtramck Recycling Commission, which has as its goal the establishment of a convenient and regular citywide recycling pick-up program. At present, the Recycling Commission has established an interim recycling program that offers a drop-off point for recyclables once a month. Increasing the recycling rate would reduce landfill disposal costs for the City, as well as promote global sustainability at a local level—both highly valuable goals to pursue for the future of Hamtramck.

One potential partner for an improved recycling initiative and community recycling effort is RecycleBank, an incentive-based recycling service provider that measures the amount recycled by each business or community member at each pick up time and translates that amount into points redeemable for discounts and coupons at partner organizations and stores. According to RecycleBank, over one million people in 20 states across the United States participate in the program, which brings the added benefit of partnering with locally-owned businesses to create the recycling incentives, supporting local small business development while helping save the planet and municipal costs. The Recycling Commission and the City of Hamtramck should reach out to RecycleBank to inquire about setting up the program in Hamtramck.

#### www.phillyrecyclingpays.com



RecycleBank successfully provides weekly recycling in cities across the country, both large and very small.

#### 2.2.4 Recycle Everything









At the beginning of 2010, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded the State of Michigan \$220 million in Neighborhood Stabilization Plan funds, \$13.9 million of which will be used by the City of Hamtramck to acquire and rehabilitate 110 homes, develop 20 new houses, and deconstruct 40 abandoned and hazardous buildings. "Deconstructing" rather than "demolishing" tear-downs means that the building will be carefully disassembled, salvageable or reusable building materials sorted and transported to a redistribution center. The City is considering arrangements with Detroit's Architectural Salvage Warehouse and Habitat for Humanity, whose Re-Store locations sell discounted, resale, and salvaged building materials. Recycling or repurposing building materials is an excellent way to reduce the cost of disposing of construction waste, as well as



to make better use of reusable resources for the sake of global sustainability. However, the benefit to Hamtramck residents could be maximized if the City were able to establish a building materials recycling center in the City itself. Hamtramck has a number of underutilized industrial buildings that could potentially make ideal sorting and storage locations for a building materials and architectural salvage recycling center. Bringing this activity closer to the City would make affordable building materials more accessible to local developers and rehabbers, as well as provide an excellent interim [or permanent] use for vacant industrial buildings or underutilized parts of industrial buildings. The idea would add to Hamtramck's green identity, promoting the culture of sustainability, green design, and recycling; and tapping into the energy of the housing rehabilitation wave sweeping through the greater Detroit area.

## **2.2.5** Consider Green Retrofits to Increase Energy Efficiency of Public Facilities





The energy efficiency of all public buildings should be assessed for the preparation of recommendations for facilities improvements that would reduce operating costs. The U.S. Green Building Council's LEED standards for Existing Buildings would serve as an excellent reference for the realm of possibilities for sustainable rehabilitations.

Hamtramck's City Hall would make a particularly good place to start. City Hall is housed in a historic former hospital building that has been through several rounds of renovations in the process of conversion for use as a municipal building. While many upgrades have occurred, much more work is required in order to complete the renovation and to make overall operations more efficient. The City estimates that a full rehabilitation of City Hall will cost

about \$8 million, a large cost up-front that will pay off in the long run in much lower operating costs. The City should strive to make green retrofits to City Hall as visible as possible to create visible symbols of the publicity statement, "we can be green on Evaline!" A green roof on City Hall would make a strong statement, not to mention help moderate the urban heat island effect, provide a durable material lifespan potentially twice as long as a traditional roof, and save on heating and cooling costs. Solar water heaters, high-efficiency windows, heat shields and thermal barriers are just a few of the many green retrofits that should be considered.

The Hamtramck Housing Commission has reported astronomical heating costs for its two public housing facilities. Energy inefficiency is a major concern that strains the Housing Commission's budget and absorbs dollars that could be used to make other improvements to their facilities or offer additional programs. The City should support the Housing Commission in their pursuit of energy efficiency grants that could help pay for new energy efficient heating systems that will drastically reduce operating costs.

## **2.2.6** Increase Public Awareness of Energy Efficiency Resources







Through its Community Capital Resources programs, United Way of Southeastern Michigan offers matching energy efficiency grants to nonprofits with residential programs. The grants can be used to pay for the cost of installing efficient heating, venting, and cooling systems, which would reduce operating expenses and create room in local nonprofit budgets for additional programs; energy efficiency audits; and energy efficiency weatherization education programs.

With funding from the Low-Income and Energy Efficiency Fund, the Michigan State Department of Human Services distributes grants to low-income households for energy efficiency upgrades, with up to 20 percent of the funding available for energy education.

The City should make an effort to compile available resources for improving energy efficiency and increase awareness of them within the community via the City's website, educational pamphlet distribution during local events and at public buildings, through block club organizations, and other methods of spreading the word: it's easier being green when you don't have to pay for it all yourself!

2.3

## ADDRESS SNOW REMOVAL PROBLEMS

During the planning process, some residents noted that many streets remain unplowed and sidewalks unshoveled after significant snowfall. There was a common perception that other cities nearby with roughly comparable costs of living do a much better job of plowing the streets and keeping the sidewalks clear of snow. Other residents complained that when the streets are plowed, they are not plowed correctly, that guite often the plows will leave large piles of snow at corners in curb ramps or right in front of one particular store, placing an unfair burden on individual businesses. If the current snow plowing services contracted out by the City cannot be improved, Hamtramck should consider sharing snow removal contracts with the City of Detroit and institute quality control measures to ensure proper plowing practices.

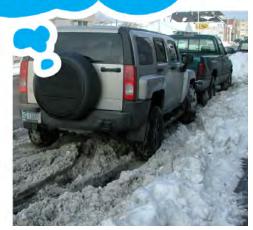
## STOP SNOWY STREETS WITH SMARTER SALTING

In a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Road Salt Education Program, volunteer road maintenance participants were trained in the proper application of road salt—when and how it is best to use de-icing treatments. The results of their new knowledge were quantified by noting how much less road salt they needed to apply to achieve the same [or better] results in melting the snow on the streets or parking lots they regularly maintain. After the educational session, all of the participants were able to reduce their salt usage by more than 75%; in one case, the 80% reduction in salt usage saved 8,500 pounds of road salt per application to melt ice in the parking lots of a large shopping center.

In keeping with other green-oriented initiatives, the City should also explore alternatives to salting streets and sidewalks, as a negative consequence of using salt to melt snow is the increased incidence of watershed chloride impairment, which is devastating to urban ecosystems. A less costly but potentially impactful approach would be to educate street salting work crews and business owners who have the task of clearing large parking lots about best management practices in applying road salt in order to minimize waste, pollution, and costs.

By the same token, residents should be made fully aware that shoveling the sidewalk in front of their property is the responsibility of the homeowner. The City should also provide a good example by ensuring that the sidewalks adjacent to publicly-owned properties are kept clear of snow—if the City fails to do this, walkability during the winter would be quite limited, given the number of parcels in Hamtramck held by government entities.

the plowing situation must be resolved.
whether it can be a city service or something
organized by neighborhood, it is
A TREMENDOUS ISSUE.
last year alone hundreds of citizens were
SHOWED IN FOR DAYS which hindered
their ability to get to and from work.



#### 2.4

## **ESTABLISH SAFER STREETS**

Community members who participated in the Master Plan process were generally of two minds on the topic of the City's police force. On the one hand, many residents stated clearly that Hamtramck's police are one of the main reasons they live in the City. Fears of consolidating services with Highland Park or Detroit often focused on losing the independence and focus of Hamtramck's police force. On the other hand, many others clearly expressed frustration at the lack of communication and poor community involvement by Hamtramck police.

An analysis of crime data indicated that about half of all crimes in Hamtramck occur in the streets, which is a significantly higher percentage than in surrounding Detroit, where the majority of crimes occur in homes. The concentration of restaurants, bars and clubs in Hamtramck, combined with the dense and walkable urban fabric makes safe streets essential to Hamtramck's future. The following strategies are structured to reinforce existing policing initiatives, many of which are underway way through Hamtramck Community Initiative's Weed and Seed program, and broadening the role of the community in policing.

MOETROIT HAS A CRIME MAP--HAMTRAMCK RESIDENTS WOULD BE WELL SERVED BY SOMETHING LIKE THAT. ??

### **2.4.1** Continue Cultural Education Workshops



Hamtramck has experienced significant changes in its ethnic make-up over the past three decades. This has brought about challenges in understanding and communicating with new cultures. It is widely recognized that there is a need for greater cultural awareness among both new residents and the police. Although many immigrants comply with local laws, many others do not simply because they are unfamiliar with them. On the flip side, the police are on the front lines in addressing community concerns and need to be able to both communicate with, and understand the cultures of, Hamtramck's foreign-born communities. Cultural education workshops should be organized through neighborhood block clubs with the cooperation of leaders of the immigrant communities to introduce these families to local police officers and help bridge the cultural divide. In addition, the City and their partners should seek funding to hire officers that speak Yemeni and Bengali, among other languages. Having officers that can communicate directly with local immigrants will improve the overall effectiveness of the department.

## **2.4.2** Reinforce the Force When Necessary

Funding for police overtime is critical to ensure that police are available when needed most. The City and their partners should continue to seek funding for police overtime. Related to this initiative, the City should also seek to organize and fund police officer reserves with the goal of improving security during peak hours of criminal activity and peak traffic incident hours and during large attendance events.

## **2.4.3** Assign Police Officers to Serve as Community Liaisons



Community policing requires effective and ongoing communication with residents. This requires resources and time from local officers, both of which are in short supply. The City has recognized this need and is pursuing funding for two Liaison officers that would serve two primary functions:

- > To work with the local youth population, which accounts for 30% of the City's population. The officers would work directly with all of the 9 local schools, D.A.R.E. and other after school programs.
- > To regularly attend block clubs and neighborhood group meetings and coordinate with residents on policing strategies.

The City's estimate for the 2 Liaison officers for a period of 3 years is \$85,000 per officer [which includes salary and benefits] per year.

#### 2.4.4 Coordinate with Resident Groups to Establish Community Policing







Resident neighborhood watch programs have the potential to be the eyes and ears of the Police Department, helping to stop crimes before they happen and making other residents feel safer on the streets of Hamtramck, especially at night. Community members have expressed interest in creating a more established community policing network, an initiative which Hamtramck's Chief of Police considers a top priority. Implementing an effective program will require the Police Department to take an active role in recruiting and educating neighbor-

hood watch groups, potentially through neighborhood block club organizations, about what the role of a neighborhood watch group is, how best to communicate with the police department, what neighborhood-specific crime patterns to look out for, and how to patrol the streets safely. Given the cultural diversity and language barriers in Hamtramck, community policing groups should aspire to recruiting a volunteer resident patrol representative of the populations living in each neighborhood.

It is important that neighborhood watch groups have a visible presence on the streets, with identifiable reflective vests or other indicators that they are not casual strollers, but are actively keeping an eye on things. Once community policing groups and patrol areas have been established, groups should consider posting signs around the patrol area to further deter potential crime or undesirable behavior.



## **2.4.5** Supplement Patrols with Bicycle Policing



Bicycle police have proven to be an effective means of both reducing crime but also introducing officers to residents in a more accessible way. Police on bicycles provide a more active police presence on the street and also support other local goals including the increasing the use of bicycles for day-to-day transportation needs. The City should seek to convert four officers from car patrol to bicycles when weather allows with an emphasis on patrolling the main streets of Campau, Conant, Caniff and Holbrook.

#### 2.4.6 Seek to Reinstate the K9 Unit

Due to budget cuts, Hamtramck lost their canine officer and unit. Public safety research shows this to be an important tool in urban policing and one that should be reinstated in the City when funds allow. The City indicates that the funding needed for 3 years is \$300,000.

#### 2.4.7 Modernize the Police Department's Records Management System

Like other City departments, the Hamtramck Police Department is in the process of catching up with the effective use of new technologies. While new technologies represent an up-front cost that can be hard to finance, there are substantial long-term benefits in both staff efficiency and City costs.

Specific to the Police Department, the City should pursue funding for a NetRMS system. NetRMS is a law enforcement records management system for recording crime in an organized, secure database. The software allows the police department store, retrieve and analyze data collected by officers. In-

formation about crime entered into the system is immediately available via computers to all officers. Following FBI guidelines, NetRMS incorporates NI-BRS [National Incident-Based Reporting System] reporting, which collects comprehensive data about crime incidents, replacing the traditional Summary UCR [Uniform Crime Reporting] system that has been in use since 1930.

In addition to NetRMS, installing in-car mobile data consoles in police cruisers would enable information to be available when it is needed most—out on the streets of Hamtramck. Mobile data consoles would allow officers to run Law Enforcement Information Network [LEIN] inquiries in the field and file reports without leaving their vehicles. To be effective in Hamtramck, the City would require 10 mobile units at a cost of \$6,500 per unit.

#### 2.5

## BETTER EQUIP THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

In many ways, implementation of other parts of the Hamtramck Master Plan will help make Hamtramck Firefighters' critical jobs easier. Street resurfacing projects will help reduce damage to ambulances incurred by severe potholes; better enforcement of no parking zones at corners and near fire hydrants will ensure better fire truck access to emergency situations; increased access to language translation services and cultural literacy workshops will help close the cultural and language barriers between firefighters and residents. In addition, targeted improvements to the fire department's equipment and to the fire station itself will help to ensure safer neighborhoods in Hamtramck.

## **2.5.1** Improve the Fire Department's Equipment

The Hamtramck Fire Department is currently in need of a few key pieces of equipment to ensure that it continues to be able to quickly and effectively respond to emergency situations. The City should actively support the Fire Department in the preparation of grants for necessary equipment, most critically, an aerial ladder and a new ladder fire engine.

New aerial ladders are quite costly at about \$1 million. The City has not had success in receiving grant funding because the City contains only one building over 4 stories. An aerial ladder is needed, however, for a couple of reasons: first, elevated water streams are more effective in containing fires; and second, because the majority of fires in Hamtramck start in alleyways, where access is often tight and hazardous electrical wires are abundant. An aerial ladder is needed to enable the fire department to put out fires from a safe distance without risking the lives of Hamtramck's firemen by forcing them to enter these dangerous locations.

The fire department's current ladder truck is 33 years old, which makes it difficult to find replacement parts when this outdated equipment is in need of repair. A new ladder truck, properly equipped, is needed to provide adequate fire protection to housing and businesses throughout the community.

#### **2.5.2** Paint the Hydrants





Hamtramck's fire hydrants are supposed to be color coded according to size of the water main so fire fighters know how much water they can expect to get out of the hydrant. However, many have faded over time and only some hydrants have been repainted. The hydrants should be painted to reflect



Former Hamtramck Mayor Albert Zak oversees the painting of a fire hydrant in April 1979. Photo: Hamtramck Heritage Collection.

this information and ensure that firefighters have the necessary water flow information to adequately fight fires. This easy and low-cost task could be an excellent project to engage kids in community stewardship, as well as introduce Hamtramck's fire fighters to neighborhood organizations.

### **2.5.3** Improve the Fire Station and Plan for Its Future

Hamtramck's Fire Station, located on Caniff west of MacKay, was built in 1918. As an old building, it is both inefficient and falls short of the space requirements needed to house modern equipment. Numerous repairs have been done simply to keep the facility operational—upgrades have not addressed the efficiency and capacity issues of the building. For example, the bays have glass front doors which are extremely inefficient in terms of energy use—instead of replacing the doors [which are also too small to accommodate a modern fire truck], the fire department has been forced to rely on the "vintage" bay heaters to keep the garage and equipment at a reasonable temperature.

To keep the station operational a little longer, a few basic and expensive upgrades are necessary including replacing the bay heaters, replacing the roof and repaving the parking lot. The Fire Department is currently developing a comprehensive needs assessment list so the City and the Fire Department can proactively plan for facility improvements.

While the Department is working to keep its existing station functional, it should also begin planning for a new station. The Fire Department should work with the City's Department of Community and Economic Development to find potential sites, explore site acquisition scenarios and, when appropriate, undertake a feasibility study for a new station. The feasibility study would provide conceptual design sketches, space programming, and a cost estimate to set a fundraising goal.

#### 2.6

# CONTINUE TO IMPROVE EDUCATION RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

The education attainment level reflects poorly on Hamtramck and remains a major concern for families with children. The School District has made improving academic achievement a priority and has developed a number of goals to improve public education in Hamtramck, However, in addition to academics, local schools face the challenge of meeting the needs of an extremely diverse and further diversifying City. The School District sees Hamtramck's diversity as an asset and promotes the fact that City schools are truly multi-cultural. However, the lack of specific programs and growth in youth population has fueled the development of five charter schools in Hamtramck. The proliferation of charter schools nationwide has been a controversial subject, as resources become more constrained in public schools [which are closing at an alarming rate, especially in the Detroit area] while charter schools seem to attract better teachers and offer higher quality programs and facilities. In Hamtramck, the charter schools offer expanded programs especially to the City's Arabic population, which has begun to create cultural enrollment divisions among the schools in Hamtramck.

### **2.6.1** Evaluate Hamtramck's Education Resources





As described above, the state of education in Hamtramck has changed substantially over the past decades. To properly understand these changes and plan for the future of education in Hamtramck, the City should reach out to the Skillman Foundation to conduct a comprehensive review of local schools. The Skillman Foundation has provided similar services for Detroit. The evaluation should identify the critical challenges facing the school system today and create a clear agenda for change that addresses programming, staffing, and facilities.

#### **2.6.2** Prioritize Facility Needs



The School District has a list of facility needs across the City's schools. As there is not enough money to make all of these improvements at this time, the District should prioritize the list and work with the City to seek grant funding for long-term improvements.

HAMTRAMCK HIGH SCHOOL
KOSCIUSZKO MIDDLE DICKINSON EAST

EARLY CHILDHOOD

HOLBROOK

HORIZON ADULT EDUCATION

COMMUNITY CENTER

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE TRANSPORTATION GARAGE MAINTENANCE GARAGE

	WORK DESCRIPTION	REPAIR COST	TOTAL COST
	ROOF REPLACEMENT REPLACEMENT MANSARD ROOF ENTRANCE DOORS HEATING CONTROLS PLASTERING AND PAINTING ASBESTOS ABATEMENT ELECTORAL MAIN DISTRIBUTION WINDOW REPLACEMENT	\$685,716 \$495,000 \$65,000 \$475,000 \$85,000 \$400,000 \$300,000 \$1,048,000	\$3,553,716
	ROOF REPLACEMENT VENTILATION AND CONTROLS PLASTERING AND PAINTING	\$278,436 \$550,000 \$60,000	\$888,436
	ROOF REPLACEMENT HEATING CONTROLS PLASTERING AND PAINTING WINDOW REPLACEMENT SECURITY CAMERAS REPLACE FIRE ALARM SYSTEM ASBESTOS ABETMENT	\$317,028 \$350,000 \$50,000 \$470,000 \$24,000 \$30,000 \$30,000	\$1,271,028
	ROOF REPLACEMENT HEATING CONTROLS PLASTERING AND PAINTING WINDOW REPLACEMENT SECURITY CAMERAS UPGRADE FIRE ALARM SYSTEM ASBESTOS ABETMENT ENTRANCE DOORS	\$182,160 \$40,000 \$25,000 \$166,000 \$24,000 \$40,000 \$18,000	\$515,160
	HEATING CONTROLS PLASTERING AND PAINTING WINDOW REPLACEMENT INSTALL FIRE ALARM SYSTEM ASBESTOS ABETMENT UPGRADE ELECTORAL SYSTEM ENTRANCE DOORS SECURITY CAMERAS	\$95,000 \$20,000 \$274,000 \$35,000 \$40,000 \$300,000 \$12,000 \$24,000	\$800,000
ĺ	ROOF REPLACEMENT SECURITY CAMERAS	\$60,000 \$24,000	\$84,000
	ROOF REPLACEMENT HEATING CONTROLS DOOR REPLACEMENT	\$318,504 \$80,000 \$30,000	\$428,504
	ROOF REPLACEMENT SECURITY CAMERAS	\$60,000 \$24,000	\$84,000
	ROOF REPLACEMENT	\$105,000	\$105,000
	ROOF REPLACEMENT	\$65,000	\$65,000

#### 2.6.3 Engage the Charter Schools





There needs to be greater connection between the City's schools and the charter schools. Both are essentially competing to fulfill the educational needs of Hamtramck's youth in a difficult economic climate, but a more cooperative relationship between the School District and the charter schools with more sharing of resources would likely be a mutually beneficial arrangement that would strengthen education in Hamtramck overall. The City and charter school leadership should establish quarterly meetings to discuss their challenges but also ways in which they can collaborate to meet mutual needs. These meetings should include the Recreation Commission and local non-profits that provide youth programming. A long-term objective of this process is to seek ways to share some resources like play spaces which are needed across all schools.

## **2.6.4** Create an After School Arabic Program





The School District is considering offering after school Arabic programs for high school and middle school students in order to build upon the foundation language skills already taught at the elementary level. The School District should offer afterschool Arabic programs, particularly at the High School level, to help maintain the overall diversity of the school system and to provide additional after school activities for youth.

#### 2.7

### SUPPORT THE EXPANSION OF THE HAMTRAMCK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Hamtramck Public Library is an invaluable community asset run by a group of highly dedicated staff members, board members, and volunteers with ambitious plans to expand the facility and programs to make the library an even greater resource to the City. The Hamtramck Public Library has accumulated funds it plans to use to make a number of improvements, both to its facility and programming. The potential library expansion envisions an addition on the adjacent lot [which it recently acquired] including new computer/media lab space, a new entrance that would also serve as a socializing space, and new historical archive space. Improvements to the library would help address some of the community needs identified by residents during the planning process, including providing free access to computers and the internet, expanding activities for local youth, providing venues and opportunities for bridging the population's multicultural social divisions, and others.

Planned improvements to the library's exterior include new signage, landscaping, and bike storage racks. As the Library is a highly visible landmark along the Caniff/I-75 gateway into the City, exterior improvements to the Library would not only benefit its users, but would also enhance the experience of entering Hamtramck for visitors.

In addition to raising funds for facility renovations, the library is doing an excellent job of both planning for additional programming and independently pursuing funding to implement it. The Library hopes to secure better digital video production equipment to be used to teach kids how to record and edit digital

MWHEREVER WE HAVE THE ROOM, WE BUILD NEW SHELVES BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO PUT THE BOOKS SOMEWHERE! !!

video. The Library has also applied for grant funding from the American Library Association to expand ESL classes, which would be of great benefit to Hamtramck's large immigrant population.

For all of these great benefits and many others, the City should support the Hamtramck Public Library in its efforts to expand. It is clear that the Library has outgrown its existing space, but before major facilities decisions are made, the following strategic space planning steps should be taken.

### **2.7.1** Initiate a Facilities Planning and Feasibility Study



The library is seeking to add 7,500 additional square feet and accommodate 200 more people per day but the library also has a number of options beyond expanding its current facility. Expansion on the current site may not be the best "bang-for-thebuck" solution, considering the limited additional space available on adjacent parcels. While the library expansion project is certainly worth considering, other scenarios should also be explored as part of a long-term facilities planning study, including beginning a satellite location and building a larger new facility on a different site. A consultant should be hired to both investigate facility planning scenarios and conduct a feasibility study to determine what a potential on-site expansion project could achieve and might cost.

#### 2.7.2 Address Parking Constraints

Parking is always used for the library and many complain that there is not enough. The Library should continue to make arrangements with the funeral home across the street for use of their lot at times when they are closed and there are special events at the library. The Library should use a similar approach with other nearby parking lot owners and, if the decision is made to expand the existing facility, unbuilt lots in close proximity to the library should be considered for acquisition and use as a parking lot to support the library.

### **2.7.3** Pursue Temporary Satellite Locations

It will take time to undertake the feasibility study described above, make long-term facilities decisions, raise funds, and establish permanent additional space for the library. In the meantime, the Library has space needs that could be somewhat alleviated through the use of temporary space. The Library should explore the idea of setting up a temporary library in storefront space on Campau for specific programs or events. A close partnership with the City's Department of Community and Economic Development as well as the DDA is needed to identify the space, secure permissions from a local property owner and assist with improvement costs. In addition to helping the library manage its space constraints and expand its programming according to its plans, a satellite library location on Campau would also help strengthen Hamtramck's primary commercial corridor by diversifying activities and bringing additional foot traffic past Campau's storefronts.

## **2.7.4** Increase Awareness of the Library's Resources

It's clear that the Library has no trouble getting foot traffic. However, it seems that some residents may not be aware of the many resources the library has to offer. One comment added to the online collaborative map stated that the library is "a great place, but could really use a tech upgrade. A computer lab would be nice so that our residents could get better access to the web." Visitors to the Library know that it has several PC workstations available, but you might not guess that without entering the doors. The Library should work with the City to advertise their programs and services both on-line and through signage and storefront displays where possible. The intent is to get the word out about this great local resource and encourage its use as a true community center for a diverse City.

#### 2.8

## FILL HOLES IN THE SERVICE GAPS

The scope of this Master Plan is limited largely to physical development and revitalization. Given the extensive and diverse social needs in the City, a full Human Capital Plan should be considered that takes stock of all existing social programs and provides a common framework to coordinate outreach and services. In the meantime, a few key themes with regard to social services emerged frequently that should be addressed by the City and local non-profit service providers.

### **2.8.1** Undertake a Social Services Audit



Reach out to every social service provider in Hamtramck to compile a comprehensive list of locally available services and resources. The detailed list should document each existing program, its objectives, target population, capacity, outreach, enrollment, schedule, and, if applicable, its outcomes.

A committee of representatives from Hamtramck's social service institutions should then critically evaluate the list, determining:

- > Whether each program is effectively serving the neighborhood.
- > Whether each special needs population [youth, teens, young parents, recent immigrants, sick or disabled, seniors, substance abusers, school dropouts, parolees and probationers, etc.] has an adequate offering of services and knowledge of those services.
- > How existing but undersubscribed services can improve their outreach and, if necessary, their programming.
- > Where there are gaps in the local social service network; which services, like parenting classes and G.E.D. courses, should be offered in the neighborhood but currently are not
- > Which services or programs, if any, are duplicative and could be more effective under a shared resource arrangement between two service providers.
- > Which existing neighborhood service providers might feasibly expand their programming to provide services identified as missing, but necessary to render the local social service network effective and complete.
- > What facility improvements or expansions are necessary to accommodate new programs and services for the community.

#### 2.8.2 Create a Coordinated Hamtramck Service Directory and Referral System



After completion of the social services audit described above, create a multi-lingual summary of locally available programs and services, and distribute the Directory to all Hamtramck residents annually to ensure that despite the City's transient population, people remain informed about local resources. Encourage all service providers to keep copies of the Directory in their offices for additional distribution as needed.

#### 2.8.3 Expand Youth Programming



**MEALS** 

SERVED

There are currently very few programs for teenagers in Hamtramck. Like many places, youth programming tends to focus on ages 12 and under but once kids reach 13, there is a dearth of activity and things to do. The Recreation Commission should supplement its existing traditional sports programs

8 new parks established (24 total in 2010, 16 in 2009)

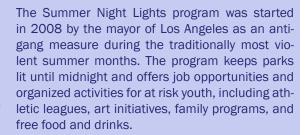
**2010 RECAP** 

710,000 participants

with a more diverse offering more reflective of the City's multicultural population with things like backgammon tournaments, cricket games, and badminton. The Recreation Commission and local non-profits should also partner with Hamtramck's creative community to expand local arts programming with a focus on contemporary and "urban" activities that might have greater appeal among Hamtramck's teens, such as mural programs, video editing and production, graphic and fashion design, and so on. In addition, Hamtramck should start planning for a dedicated teen center that provides kids a place to go for different activities, access computers and other programs.

Specifically, a teen center should seek to nurture the talent of youth in both music and dance. In a City so rich in diversity as well as with such a distinct identity as a music scene in the Greater Detroit Area, this has the potential to truly educate residents and youth about the range of cultures in the City. With music, the City should work with the School District to promote events like "battle of the Hamtramck bands" and provide support for school music programs.

#### **PRECEDENT**



1000 jobs created http://mayor.lacity.org/Issues/GangReduction/SummerNightLights

### **2.8.4** Provide Night Activities and Safe Havens for Youth







Kids need a safe place to go, especially in the evenings, to stay out of harm's way. Providing night activities and safe havens in the summer is particularly important as kids are out of school with nowhere to go and nothing to do. Beyond missed opportunities for growth and development, residents and students are concerned that a lack of summer activities could result in increased violence in the community. Keeping the community center open late and the parks lit at night with activities during the summer months are critical to the health and safety of the community's youth and their families.

## **2.8.5** Help Foreign-Born Residents Establish New Roots in Hamtramck







Hamtramck is a community that understands the immigrant experience and the immigrant business experience better than most. The City can take advantage of this deep wealth of knowledge by facilitating the formation of Cultural Roundtables to welcome new families to the United States and to Hamtramck and to network and support immigrant business owners. The establishment of an Office of Cultural Affairs that would oversee and facilitate the establishment of cultural services and social

MEVERY DECADE BRINGS A NEW POPULATION TO HAMTRAMCK, SO THERE IS ALWAYS A NEED TO HELP PEOPLE TO ASSIMILATE TO THE CITY. ??

networking groups for immigrant populations in the City of Hamtramck. These groups should be citizenled with support from the City, and should have a direct link to City Hall. The objectives of this program should be:

- > To provide a welcoming, open door to immigrants and their families, helping them to quickly develop a sense of community and acceptance.
- > To provide immigrant groups a network in which to share information, contacts, ideas, and knowledge.
- > To provide the city and other institutions access to groups of people who may need clearer understanding of local laws, regulations and standards, and direct access to information sources and translation services.
- > To expand Hamtramck's reach into the global community, developing a magnet to attract and hold import and export opportunities, and bringing to Hamtramck new commercial and manufacturing opportunities.
- > To expand Hamtramck's resources as a cultural and heritage tourism destination.
- > To discover and develop the talents and skills of emerging leaders in the immigrant community, giving them a positive outlet and experience with local government.

The Cultural Roundtables should be encouraged to develop cultural events and programs specific to their cultures, enlisting the help of the Piast Institute and the Polish community, the Islamic Center, Bosnian American Islamic Center, the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services [ACCESS], Peoples Community Services, Hamtramck United Social Services, the Arab American Chaldean Council, and other regional cultural associations to educate, mentor, and guide newer immigrant groups on how to produce successful cultural events in Hamtramck. Encourage the Cultural Roundtables to develop community programs regarding the culinary arts, language arts, visual arts and performing arts.

### 2.8.6 Establish an "Almost Free Clinic" in Hamtramck



The lack of health care services in Hamtramck is a source of stress for residents and major drain on City and non-profit services. The City's Fire Department often gets calls simply because a family needs a ride to a health center or hospital and some local community service providers end up driving residents as far as Dearborn for services. Local kids need vision and hearing services and some feel that Hamtramck lacks adequate substance abuse programs. The City should work with

local non-profits including HUSS to start a low-cost health clinic in Hamtramck. Local medical schools should be contacted to determine if they would be interested in helping to fund and run a student-run free clinic in Hamtramck. Ferndale faced some similar challenges and have worked to create a non-profit free clinic to serve local needs. Initial contacts should be made with Ferndale to learn about their process.

#### 2.9

### PLUG CITY HALL IN TO NEW TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

**2.9.1** Conduct an Information Technology Needs Assessment for City Agencies



Given City Hall's staffing constraints, making better use of modern technology has the potential to free up many precious hours in the workweeks of City officials and City Hall employees. In addition to being greener, using computers, shared networks, and handheld devices instead of paperwork, copier machines, and space-consuming file storage can also be cheaper, especially since much of the necessary hardware is likely already to be found in City Hall-it may just be a question of eliminating outdated processes by making the most of City Hall's existing technology capabilities. The City should hire tech consultants to advise the City on how it can improve its services, reduce its workload, and reduce its costs through optimal use of existing resources and potential upgrades in City Hall.

#### **PRECEDENT**

The mission of FernCare is to provide no-cost medical care to the medically uninsured or under-insured residents of the area. The purpose is limited to those activities that are permissible for a 501 [c] [3] tax exempt organization as specified by the Internal Revenue Code. Currently in the last stages of preparing to open its doors to patients, the clinic will treat persons from 19 through 64 years of age. It will provide primarily non-emergency maintenance care of chronic illness, do checkups, diagnose and treat acute day-to-day illness, dispense generic medications, and make specialist referrals for obstetric, dental care and sexually transmitted disease treatment and other care beyond its scope of service.

## 2.9.2 Modernize Records Keeping and Data Management





A primary focus of a technology needs assessment should be digital records keeping and data management methods calibrated to the demands of each department in City Hall. Hamtramck City Hall has suffered many misfortunes in the latter half of the twentieth century with respect to preserving original and irreplaceable maps of city infrastructure, public records, and other important city documents, many of which have been irreparably damaged by leaks from roof damage or accidentally disposed of over the years. This lack of adequate records keeping has added to the many challenges the offices of City Hall today. The City's Department of Public Services, for instance, has had to slowly rebuild its knowledge of the underground combined sewer and stormwater infrastructure after many important maps and drawings of the system were lost to damage. Now that City Hall has been restored to keep the elements out, it's time to think about safer, more spatially-economic, and more organized methods of records keeping and database management through digitizing the City's data and training the City's departments to use and maintain digital databases.

The City is already pursuing funding for document imaging and management software that will digitally archive records and documents, thereby enhancing the City's ability to share, track and retrieve documents. The City should also make it a priority to equip both the Departments of Public Services and of Community and Economic Development with Geographic Information System [GIS] capabilities and resources, which would modernize the City's recording and management of mapped information [streets, building footprints, zoning districts, trees, utilities, impervious surfaces, etc.], thereby avoid-

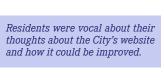
city needs a major

WEBSITE

O'WERHAUL

could be a resource center to many degrees...

keep this online map! an SGSY TO USE ONLINE INTERACTIVE MAP like this one could be used by residents to communicate PROBLEM SPOTS to city officials. It would serve the community in giving them a sounding board and another way to communicate with CITY HALL.







ing the dangers of losing information on physical maps, as well as translating the City's geospatial data into a format that is compatible with State and County mapping software. The capabilities of GIS software could improve the day-to-day workflow of these departments simply by making spatial information more accessible to them and keeping it in a format that is easily kept up to date.

#### 2.9.3 Reboot the City's Website





Though it has undergone some improvements in recent years, over the course of the planning process the City's website has been under constant fire by residents and community members who have pointed out that it is far behind many other city websites in terms of functionality, content, and aesthetics, all of which reflect poorly on the City's image. Basic information that would be quite useful

to residents, city workers, visitors, and local business owners should be made available on the website, including:

- > A regularly updated arts and cultural events calendar
- > A searchable city hall phone, email, and location directory that points residents and business owners in the right direction when they have to pay for permits, taxes, apply for a business license, and other tasks
- > A list of answers to the clerk's window's "frequently asked questions"
- > Multi-language "how-to" guides for various city hall processes, such as "how to start a business," "how to get a building permit," "how to report a building code violation," and so on

> A description of each office in city hall that details their specific functions and purposes

Provision of this type of information could not only make life easier for residents and workers, it could also free up time for the employees and officials in City Hall if they are able to spend less time explaining the who, when, where, why and how of City Hall as a result of posting this basic information online.

In addition to providing useful public information, a more robust website could become a venue for greater transparency in local government, which would be one way to improve confidence in City Hall and to engage the community in the issues it faces.

- > a calendar of public meetings at City Hall
- > minutes, agendas, video recordings, and other documentation of City Council and other public meetings
- > an easily searchable and browseable listing of the city's ordinances provided in multiple languages
- > an annual summary of the operating budget that explains the City's major financial decisions in plain language [and in multiple languages]

In addition to improving the city's website as a method of information delivery, the website could become an online venue for a number of additional interactive functions that would allow residents to take care of specific City Hall-related tasks without making the trip to City Hall. For instance, the online project page that was created as a part of the master planning process featured an interactive collaborative map that the community used to contribute their insights and ideas about Hamtramck. Several community members suggested that the mapping function be preserved after the end of the master planning process as an ongoing public

participation method, as well as a web-based 3-1-1 reporting system to inform the cities of public realm issues such as severe potholes, nuisance properties, code violations, and so on. Additional interactive functions such as e-pay options for city bills, parking fines, and fees could reduce

The website could become a valuable informational resource in countless ways, all of which could be considered as part of a comprehensive reboot of the site. A team of web developers should consult each office of City Hall to determine what general and specific information is most frequently requested of them, and what information needs to be regularly updated. The website reboot process should include a discussion about how the information on the website will be updated, how often it should be updated and who will be responsible for maintaining each office's web content.

## **2.9.4** Establish a City Hall Compu-Concierge

Recognizing that many households in Hamtramck may not have access to the Internet, it is recommended that a public access computer kiosk be installed near the entrance of City Hall. This "City Hall Compu-Concierge" would provide easy access to the digital and online resources eventually made available by the City, conveniently located to point visitors in the right direction just as they enter the building and begin to formulate questions such as "where do I find..." or "who should I talk to if..." Limiting the computer's functionality would be an easy way to prevent unintended use. Language translation software could enable non-native speakers of English to translate questions or words to prepare them for their visit to City Hall.

LETECHNOLOGY IS PARAMOUNT IN CITY HALL PUNCTIONING MORE EFFICIENTLY AND SMOOTHLY. !!

## **2.9.5** Overhaul Parcel Database Management





Parcel-specific data [such as ownership information, assessed value, etc.] is maintained digitally by the City's Tax Assessor, but there is no easy way of linking the information in the database to the parcels in the city's paper-based parcel maps. The disconnect between the City's parcel location methods using maps and the parcel-specific database comprise an outdated system that severely limiting access to and generation of useful parcel data in a number additional City departments, including Public Services [especially with respect to code enforcement activities] and the City Clerk's Office.

The situation is further complicated by Hamtramck's multiple parcel identification numbering and coding systems: parcels have two sets of identification numbers linking parcels to the maps, and a third numbering system that links parcels to the Assessor's parcel data. The confusion this creates has complicated the County's recent efforts to assist Hamtramck in producing GIS-based parcel-specific databases. It is recommended that, in tandem with acquiring GIS software [which would facilitate links between digital parcel maps and associated parcel-based datal, the City discuss strategies to modernize and standardize parcel numbering and identification systems to facilitate better maintenance and sharing of parcel-specific information about properties in Hamtramck. To improve better exchange of data between the City and County, the City is already pursuing funding for the acquisition of County Equalizer Data Link technology, which links the City Assessor with the County Assessor's Office, allowing for "real time" updates of ownership information. This capability would eventually allow public access to searchable ownership information and parcel records through the City's website.

ESTABLISH BALANCED STREETS WITH IMPROVED SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR DRIVERS, PEDESTRIANS, AND BICYCLISTS ALIKE. ENHANCE RIGHT-OF-WAYS TO PROMOTE THE CITY'S IMAGE, CREATE A MORE PLEASANT PUBLIC REALM, AND STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS. CREATE BETTER TRANSIT CONNECTIONS WITHIN HAMTRAMCK AND TO/FROM LOCATIONS OUTISIDE THE CITY.

Transportation is not just about getting from point a to point b—it impacts the City's image, healthy, safety, and economic development. Hamtramck's streets constitute the majority of the public realm—the environment that residents and workers experience on a daily basis; that provides the backdrop for the creation of memories; that creates impressions on visitors intrinsically linked to perception of the City itself. Public investment in Hamtramck's streets and sidewalks will bring great benefits to many other aspects of life in Hamtramck, as well as to the image of the City in the minds of those who have experienced it.

These days, referring to walking, biking, and public transit as "alternative modes" of transportation is an outdated concept. The recommendations of this chapter intend to place each mode of getting around on equal footing, so to speak. This will require reclaiming space for bikes and pedestrians in public rights-of-way that is currently provided for cars. However, there are a number of opportunities to accomplish this in Hamtramck without impacting the operations of auto traffic on the City's roadways. The overall goal is to create a balanced street system that is safe for pedestrians, bikers, and motorists alike, and provides convenient access to public transit.

#### 3.1

## PRIORITIZE STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

## **3.1.1** Maximize the Opportunity of Street Reconstruction Projects

The conditions of the streets in Hamtramck is a significant issue. While residents made it clear that they appreciated the City's recent increase in repaving efforts, also it was noted on a number of occasions that the improved streets quickly deteriorated after being repaved. Based on the master plan street condition survey, one-third of recent repaving projects were found to be only in "fair" condition. This is due to a number of factors: the "bandaid approach" to street repaving by simply patching potholes and cracks; the "mill and fill" method, in which only a thin layer of asphalt is removed and a new layer is poured on top of older layers; or simply "painting" the top surface of the road with an impervious material to keep water out.

Hamtramck's inadequate stormwater infrastructure also has contributed to the deteriorating conditions of City streets. It allows water to puddle on the street, seep through cracks, and become trapped within the many layers of decades of asphalt. In cold weather, this water freezes, cracks, and further damages the road. The effects of the freeze/thaw cycle and regular street flooding, combined with the regularly patched-up and paved-over street surface, exacerbate ripples, potholes, and cracks. This cycle contributes to the deterioration of the road conditions and the City can't keep up with the necessary maintenance.

It was also observed that many of the streets have little to no grade separation between the curb due to new layers of asphalt simply being poured over the road. This encourages parking on the sidewalk,

which makes Hamtramck's streets less walkable and creates visually unappealing strips of mud and dirt where once there were small green buffers on Hamtramck's residential streets. Though Section 53.003 of the municipal code requires that when streets are repaved, "the sidewalks shall be raised or lowered to conform to the lines and grades that shall be officially established and as required by the Department of Public Services," it appears as though this policy has not always been followed.

Given the budget constraints of the City over the past several years, these low-cost methods of street maintenance have really been the only option. However, the City's pressing need to address its failing stormwater infrastructure provides an opportunity to coordinate additional improvements, such as streetscapes and bike lanes. The streets that have been prioritized for stormwater infrastructure reconstruction projects also happen to be some of the streets in Hamtramck most in need of complete reconstruction due to poor condition: Conant Street from Carpenter to Hamtramck Drive; Caniff Street from Nagel to Conant; Holbrook Street from Conant to St. Aubin; and Lumpkin Street from Carpenter to Denton [as shown in Figure 14]. Accomplishing multiple improvement projects as part of one large project will reduce the impacts on traffic operations and the adjacent neighborhoods that if the projects were constructed separately.

While the stormwater infrastructure improvement project streets are certainly a high priority, there are many other streets that could use a facelift. Given limited resources, there are a number of oth-

11 MANY CURBS ARE SHORT BECAUSE THE STREET HAS BEEN REPAVED SO MUCH. ALL OVER THE CITY, THERE ARE SPOTS WHERE PEOPLE HAVE BUILT THEIR OWN CURBS TO KEEP THE DIRT IN THE EASEMENT FROM WASHING INTO THE STREET. 17



A city workers fills a crack in the pavement on Jos. Campau in 1986. Over the decades, Jos. Campau has been repaved and patched innumerable times. Photo and caption: Hamtramck Heritage Collection.

er factors to be taken into consideration in determining which streets would make good candidates for reconstruction rather than "bandaid approach" methods in addition to these high-priority streets. In order to create a general framework for prioritizing street reconstruction projects, a point system was devised to assign higher priority scores to streets that have multiple justifications for reconstruction. For each segment of Hamtramck's streets, a score of "1" was given for each of the following conditions, the cumulative score of which is shown in Figure 16:

- > a surveyed street condition of "fair" or "poor"
- > streets selected for reconstruction to rebuild sewer infrastructure
- > priority tree planting streets [1.5.3]
- > streets that will need to be resurfaced and striped in order to implement the Hamtramck Bikeway and the proposed extended network [3.4.2]
- > high-visibility corridors where an investment in improving the public realm would also help improve perception and the city's image



**16.** Street reconstruction priority scale

The streets slated for sewer reconstruction score very highly with other criteria as well; in fact, the only segments of streets in Hamtramck with the maximum score are also included in the City's sewer reconstruction plan. As a general rule, the City should consider each reconstruction project an opportunity to enhance the streetscape rather than just restore the street surface. Coordinating these additional streetscape improvements, as well as others, with large street reconstruction projects would maximize the opportunity, efficiency, and impact of dollars spent on roads in Hamtramck, adding public realm and quality of life benefits to the benefits of improving transportation routes. When presented with future opportunities to undertake street reconstruction projects, the City should determine the marginal costs of making a range of additional improvements in conjunction with the right-of-way improvements, including:

- > burying power lines to improve street aesthetics and better accommodate taller street trees with bigger canopies
- > using porous asphalt for on-street parking lanes
- > integrating tree trenches with permeable curbs and other green infrastructure elements, ideally tied to storm drains and pipes underground [2.1.5]
- adding curb extensions for mid-block crossings and corners
- > providing pedestrian-scale lighting, restoring curbs and sidewalks, and so on.





Left: In 1999, Lawrence Tech students who were engaged in rethinking the city's urban design elements created this sketch for the north end of Campau. The project proposed that "re-styling Jos. Campau north of Caniff as a tree-lined boulevard would slow traffic, make it safer for pedestrians and spark commercial and residential development." Right: Residents expressed a variety of concerns regarding the challenges pedestrians face on the north end of Campau.

## **3.1.2** Reconstruct Campau Between Caniff and Carpenter



Joseph Campau Street, between Caniff and Carpenter Street, has a number of concerns with respect to pedestrian safety. Its excessive width encourages vehicular speeding and makes it difficult for pedestrian to cross. There are also limited opportunities to cross the street because of the shift in block direction, which has led to people jaywalking in order to reach their destination. However, the street's width also provides a number of opportunities to calm the roadway, which would improve pedestrian safety and encourage more pedestrian activity in the future.

The idea of narrowing the expansive cartway to slow speeders and populating the sidewalks with trees and streetscape elements to make it feel less barren is by no means a new idea. In fact, it has been the subject of many transformative visions for the City over the years, which has prompted residents to ask, "when is this actually going to happen?" The endurance of the idea over the years and the excitement it still creates among residents speaks to the soundness of the concept that the north side of Campau is ripe for a transformation.

Today, the City is pursuing funding for "Hamtramck City Promenade," which involves construction of a linear park and median system along Campau running from Caniff north to Carpenter. The Promenade is envisioned to add valuable green space and include a landscaped median, public art, pocket parks, and design elements that will allow for coordinated closure of all traffic lanes for large scale public events and festivals. Taking Hamtramck City Promenade beyond the verbal description phase, this set of recommendations provides a conceptual design stepping stone for the streetscape improvement project, intended to inform the City's procurement of detailed design documents from an engineering firm.



## **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

- (A) UNDERUTILIZED SLACK SPACE
- B EXCESSIVELY LONG CROSSING DISTANCES
- © BARREN SIDEWALK; LACK OF STREET TREES
- D EXCESSIVELY WIDE INTERSECTION THROAT WIDTHS
- E FADED/NON-UNIFORM CROSSWALK STRIPING
- F TRAFFIC LIGHT SUPPORTS CONFLICT WITH PEDESTRIAN ZONE

**17.** Campau and Caniff existing plan view

Developing a more balanced street by reclaiming underutilized asphalt for pedestrians will create a more lively and visually pleasant pedestrian-oriented streetscape, improve the marketability of the underutilized retail spaces and undeveloped lots on both sides of the street, and establish a flexible environment that is sensitive to the spatial and atmospheric needs of an event space. It is essential that the City engage representatives of the County and MDOT through each stage of transforming the street, as Joseph Campau is one of Hamtramck's two County minor arterials. The transformation of this stretch of Campau is envisioned in two phases. Phase One improvements are intended to immediately address residents' safety concerns regarding the difficulty of crossing the street. Increasing the visibility of existing crosswalks across Campau at Caniff, Commor, and Carpenter Streets will help improve visibility of pedestrians, as well as make them feel safer crossing the street. Additionally, the City should also explore the feasibility of adding mid-block crossings to reduce the frequency of dangerous jaywalking and create better pedestrian connectivity across Campau. Paired with HAWK signals and speed tables, mid-block crossings can simultaneously accommodate pedestrian crossings and act as a traffic calming devices by discouraging speeding between traffic lights.

The crosswalk improvements proposed in Phase One are preserved through Phase Two of the street's reconfiguration. For this reason, the use

of either inlaid thermoplastic or imprinted hot mix asphalt is recommended for crosswalk patterning, which means the street surface underneath the crosswalk may have to be replaced—given the condition of Campau north of Caniff and the number of years that have passed since the last time it was entirely repaved, it is assumed that implementing crosswalk improvements will require repaving this small portion of the street in the short-term. See [3.3.3] for more information.

The volume of traffic on the northern stretch of Campau does not require two lanes of traffic in each direction. By removing one travel lane in each direction, Campau can be reconfigured to provide one travel lane in each direction, with a painted median area separating north- and south-bound traffic. The position of the median should shift in order to accommodate turning lanes, wherever they are needed along the street. This change will not impact the on-street parking supply on Campau.

The Phase One painted pattern median "placeholder," is meant to be a temporary paint application that would have to be repainted on a yearly basis, contingent upon funding and resident support. While surface paint is significantly less costly than durable asphalt patterning processes, it is unlikely that it would last longer than 8 to 12 months. The painted median's design presents an opportunity to hold an annual competition or collaborative design process among local artists and residents, essentially a temporary art installation, but its main purpose is to train drivers to adapt their driving behavior on Campau north of Caniff to conform to the Phase Two intersection configurations and lane organization.

Additional Phase One improvements specific to the intersection of Campau and Caniff are shown in Figure 18. In addition to adding more visible crosswalks and the painted pattern median place holder.







At one time, the north side of the intersection of Campau and Caniff featured pedestrian safety areas at the corners, but they were removed in April 1952 to make the intersection more navigable by car. Photo: Hamtramck Heritage Collection.

a temporary creative use of street paint and flexible street bollards ["breakaway bollards"] reassign a previously gratuitous area of asphalt on the northwest corner to a more pedestrian-oriented use by reducing the crossing distance across Campau and creating a more visible protected area for pedestrians waiting to cross the street. The area simultaneously "pinches" the excessively wide roadway, which will have the effect of slowing traffic through the intersection. The area could also be put to more interesting uses that bring new activities to the street—the area could become a food truck court, a site-specific installation site for local artists, or an opportunity to creatively demonstrate "upcycling" in the form of urban gardening installations.

The Phase Two conceptual design integrates the permanent improvements completed in Phase One with a number of additional proposed improvements. The proposed Phase Two redesign eliminates excessive throat widths and "squeezes" the intersection, leaving enough space to accommodate necessary traffic patterns while reducing the crossing distance and improving pedestrian visibility by introducing corner curb extensions. The dotted lines in the Phase Two conceptual dia-



#### **PHASE TWO**

- (A) PLANTED MEDIAN/TURN LANE
- (B) PERMEABLE PAVERS/TREE
  TRENCHES AT STREET EDGE
- © POROUS ASPHALT ON-STREET PARKING
- D HIGHLY VISIBLE BUS LANE MARKINGS
- E INFORMATION KIOSKS/ COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARDS
- F TRAFFIC LIGHT SUPPORTS REPOSITIONED OUTSIDE OF PEDESTRIAN ZONE
- O POTENTIAL BIKE PARKING LOCATIONS
- .... LOCATION OF EXISTING CURB

**19.** Campau and Caniff phase two improvements

gram shown in Figure 19 indicate the locations of existing curblines. The most dramatic improvement is made across the north side of the intersection—while crossing Campau north of Caniff is currently a 77-foot journey, the conceptual reconfiguration demonstrates that this distance could be cut nearly in half, with a new crosswalk length of only 47 feet.

Additional improvements complete a dramatic transformation that establishes a better "sense of arrival" at this central crossroads in Hamtramck:

#### > A GREENER STREET

The addition of street trees, permeable areas, and the planted median would create a more pleasant and inhabitable streetscape, as well as improving stormwater management. Use of permeable curbs punctuated by small openings that will allow stormwater to infiltrate the planted areas of the median and along the street's edges will create a natural stormwater management system that will result in less stormwater flowing into the city's overstressed combined sewer system.

#### > A BIKE AND TRANSIT-FRIENDLY STREET

Increasing the visibility of the bus lanes at this intersection will both discourage illegal parking in the bus lane and make the locations of the bus stops more visible, thereby promoting public transit use. While Campau is not identified as a part of Hamtramck's proposed bike network, it should nevertheless provide plenty of bike parking options.

#### > A CONTINUOUS PEDESTRIAN ZONE

The present locations of traffic light supports and miscellaneous street utility boxes are scattered across the width of the sidewalk—the prospect of re constructing the sidewalks and curbs presents an opportunity to remedy this situation and aligning street furniture and infrastructure in a "utility zone" on the street side of the sidewalk where it does not obstruct pedestrian paths.

#### > A WELL-LIT SIDEWALK

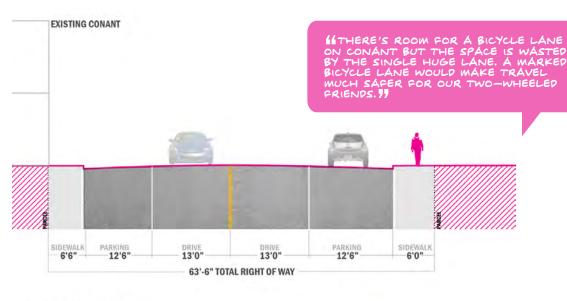
Provision of pedestrian-scale lighting is an essential part of the streetscape improvement. Not only would it improve safety and the perception of safety, it may also encourage use of public transit after dark and would serve as a necessary nightscape element to accompany events and festivals held on the street after sundown.

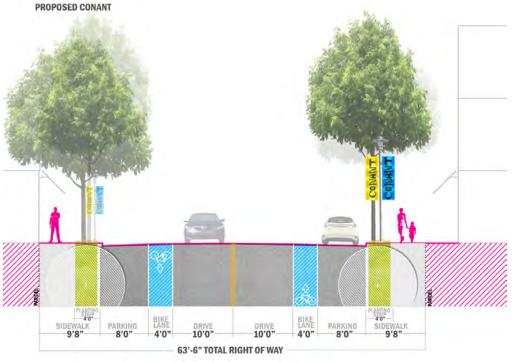
#### > A FLEXIBLE EVENT SPACE

In order to ensure that the presence of the median doesn't "cleave" the street, which would limit its use for street fairs and festivals, the median should have regular crossings flush with the street's surface that permit passage from one side of the street to the other without forcing pedestrians to walk across planted areas and provide a continuous surface to accommodate wheelchair users and child strollers.

#### > A WELCOMING CROSSROADS

This intersection serves as a gateway entrance to Joseph Campau and to the heart of the City of Hamtramck. The opportunity here is to provide visitors with a sense of bearing and provide information about the city and its offerings, which can be done in any number of creative ways. The function of the traditional information "kiosk" can be reimagined in any number of forms, which could be the subject of a local design competition or a project for students of industrial design, architecture, or interaction design.





**20.** Conant redesign street section

#### 3.1.3 Reconstruct Conant Street



In public input mapping activities, Conant Street got more attention than any other street due to extensive transportation-related issues: excessively wide lanes, lack of striping, uneven road surfaces and dangerous potholes, eroded curbs, narrow sidewalks in very poor condition, and improper bus shelter placement and design were identified as major issues by community members. Stakeholders also expressed that the overall character of the street detracts from the shopping experience of this important commercial corridor. Improving the public realm experience of Conant Street is critical to supporting the continued growth of businesses along Conant Avenue, as well as improving the quality of life for residents who regularly travel on this major collector street.

Perhaps the most frequently mentioned concern was the street's poor condition. The last time Conant was reconstructed was 35 years ago—since then it's just been the "bandaid" approach of street maintenance. This degree of street condition degradation alone would be enough to make Conant's reconstruction a priority, but given that the city's main sewer line runs deep below Conant Street and is the most critical part of the sewer rebuilding project, Conant Street's complete reconstruction is an absolute necessity. However, the reconstruction project should not be seen as simply a matter of

LIPUE TO THE GROSS ERRORS IN REPAVING THIS SECTION, DRIVERS EITHER HAVE TO ENDURE A FRAME—SHAKING PRIVE ON THIS SECTION OF ROAP OR THEY TRY TO AVOID THE BUMPS BY DRIVING ON THE EXTREME RIGHT OF THE LANE. THIS CREATES A PANGER TO BOTH DRIVERS AND PEDESTRIANS.





**21.** Conant existing street view and proposed streetscape redesign perspective rendering

replacing sewer lines and repaving the street—it is a strategic opportunity to bring a new face to Campau Street through a comprehensive redesign of the right-of-way.

The Conant Street redesign should better accommodate bikes and pedestrians while having a minimal impact on on-street parking. The lanes on Conant are much wider than they need to be, which

encourages speeding and reduces the safety for all users. The amount of traffic this street typically has could be accommodated just as well with just one lane in either direction and a center turn lane where necessary. The proposed right-of-way reorganization is shown in Figure 20 [a typical street section illustrating the right-of-way where turning lanes are not needed]. Extending the sidewalk allows plenty of room for a clear pedestrian path,

as well as a four-foot utility and planting zone. The proposed lane organization creates space for bike lanes with minimal disturbance to on-street parking. Pedestrian-scale street lamps would improve night visibility on this particularly dark street, which is especially important to support the later hours of many of the businesses that exist on Conant.

#### 3.1.4 Improve Intersection of Conant and Commor



This intersection was identified by the greatest number of community members as a dangerous intersection for pedestrians and motorists. The two segments of Commor are offset by more than 50 feet at its intersection with Conant. This makes crossing Conant by car quite difficult, especially considering the lack of a traffic signal here. Traffic is presently regulated only by stop signs on Commor, so drivers stopped on the east side of Conant have to wait for a fairly wide opening in the flow of traffic in order to make it across difficult. In the process of completing this complicated traffic maneuver, drivers are less likely to notice pedestrians, who have no benefit of crosswalk striping whatsoever to help them across this intersection. To further complicate the traffic pattern at this intersection, the gas station on the northeast corner of Conant and Commor has three wide curb cuts on its frontage on Commor and Conant. A number of additional issues, as outlined in Figure 22, make this intersection a prime candidate for targeted improvements to traffic and pedestrian safety.

Proposed improvements to the intersection, as shown in Figure 23, would improve safety and operations for all users. In addition to improvements proposed for the length of Conant [3.1.3] changes specific to this intersection include the addition of a traffic light to better manage traffic flows; curb extensions and highly visible crosswalks to improve visibility of pedestrians and reduce crossing distances: and curb cut consolidation at businesses that have excessive or continuous curb cuts.





LACK OF CROSSWALKS

DANGEROUS DRIVEWAY

BARREN SIDEWALK; LACK OF STREET TREES

LACK OF PERMEABLE SURFACE; POOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

EXCESSIVE CURB CUT LENGTH

UNPLANTED LANDSCAPING STRIPS

R ILLEGAL PARKING IN

Existing Conant and

The offset alignment of Commor, combined with the many driveways at the corner gas station make for a chaotic intersection.



**23.** Proposed Conant and Commor reconfiguration plan view

## **PROPOSED**

- (A) WIDENED SIDEWALK AND CORNER CURB EXTENSIONS
- B INTERSECTION TRAFFIC SIGNALIZATION
- (C) HIGHLY VISIBLE BIKE LANES
- D HIGHLY VISIBLE FIRE LANE MARKINGS
- E PERMEABLE PAVERS/TREE TRENCHES AT STREET EDGE\*
- F POROUS ASPHALT ON-STREET PARKING
- G EXCESSIVE CURB CUT CONSOLIDATION
- H PLANTINGS IN EXSTING OPPORTUNITY SITES
- IMPROVED PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
- (S) POTENTIAL BIKE PARKING LOCATIONS
- DRIVEWAYS
- --- LOCATION OF EXISTING CURB LINES

<sup>\*</sup> WHERE SIDEWALK WIDTH IS AT LEAST 9 FEET.

## **3.1.5** Improve Intersection Sight Distances







Intersection sight distance refers to the extent of a motorist's field of vision while stopped at a stop sign or traffic light. Visual obstructions on either side of the stopped vehicle, including cars parked too close to the corner, utility boxes, trees or plantings above eye height, and so on, can limit the driver's view of oncoming cross traffic, bicyclists, and pedestrians crossing the street, making it difficult to safely turn or proceed through the intersection. In Hamtramck, the most common issue constraining intersection sight distance is the frequency of cars parked too close to the corner. This is a traffic safety concern that places everyone at risk.



Cars parked in no parking zones near intersections limits visibility and negatively impacts pedestrian safety.

#### > CODIFY CORNER "NO PARKING" ZONE LENGTH

The City should establish standards for acceptable minimum lengths for "No Parking" zones and adopt an ordinance to codify them in the Hamtramck Code of Ordinances. The use of one hard-and-fast distance for every case in the City is not advised—zone lengths should be more responsive to conditions at particular intersections. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials evaluates intersection sight distance as a function of the speed of cross traffic—the higher the speed of traffic travelling perpendicular to a driver stopped at an intersection, the more time the driver will need to be able to see the car as it approaches in order for him to have sufficient reaction time before the approaching car enters the intersection. In order to give the driver more reaction time, on-street parking must be pushed farther from the curb and other visual obstructions minimized at street corners.

In addition to adjusting the length of the corner "No Parking" zone according to speed limit, further consideration must be given to intersections on busy streets. Caniff, for instance, is a particularly challenging street to turn onto. The shift in block direction north of Caniff causes several streets to terminate at Caniff, with many of these intersections regulated only by stop signs for the smaller cross streets. Because Caniff has high traffic volumes, drivers waiting at a stop sign to turn onto Caniff are at the mercy of sometimes infrequent openings in the constant stream of cross traffic. This creates the mindset that if a small opening appears, the driver should go for it even if he's not sure whether more traffic might be on the way. Forcing drivers to blindly turn onto a busy street like Caniff is highly dangerous, especially given the number of schools nearby. A contextually-sensitive approach to improving intersection sight distance would impose stricter parking regulations [a longer "No Parking" zone] on Caniff and other streets that are particularly difficult to cross or turn onto for any reason.

## > REGULARLY REPAINT THE CURBS IN "NO PARKING" ZONES

Some of the City's curbs were repainted recently to make the "No Parking" zones more visible, but the majority remain faded. Curb painting is a simple, low-cost task that could easily be undertaken immediately by Block Club organizations or other community volunteer groups with the oversight of City officials. Some cities have begun painting "No Parking" zone stripes on the street surface itself, about 8 feet into the roadway from the curb where it is more visible to drivers looking for parking spaces, a practice that would be helpful for corners and all other "No Parking" zones.



Striping applied inside of the parking lane in Cape May, New Jersey, makes "No Parking" zones more visually apparent both to drivers looking for a spot and to parking enforcement officials.

#### > POST SIGNAGE TO MAKE "NO PARKING" ZONES AP-PARENT AT ALL TIMES

Using sidewalk signs instead of or in addition to painted curbs to indicate "No Parking" zones at corners would make them visible and enforceable throughout the year, regardless of snow cover. While installing signs would be a larger up-front cost, they would require less regular maintenance than painted curbs, which would be a factor to consider in potentially phasing out painted curbs over time and relying entirely on signage to indicate "No Parking" zones.

#### > ENFORCE "NO PARKING" ZONES AT CORNERS

Illegal parking in the "No Parking" zones at intersections should never be tolerated, regardless of time of day, sympathy for lack of on-street parking availability, or specific location. Violators must be ticketed immediately in order to ensure traffic safety at intersections.

#### > CREATE BARRIERS TO ILLEGAL PARKING AT CORNERS

Installing curb extensions at corners to improve pedestrian visibility to drivers and reduce crossing distances also has another benefit in that it precludes illegal parking at corners. A temporary or lower cost method of achieving the same result is to use flexible street bollards ["breakaway bollards"] to prevent drivers from parking too close to the corner.



Breakaway bollards can be used to ensure "No Parking Zones" aren't infringed upon.

3.2

### **RESTORE PUBLIC ALLEYS**

Community members have identified a number of problems associated with Hamtramck's alleys. Some property owners have utilized back alleys for trash heaps, while others have allowed rear yard trees and plants to become overgrown, limiting accessibility in the alley. Residents who use alleyways as bike paths in order to avoid Hamtramck's tight and congested streets reported their routes are often interrupted by impassable piles of garbage. In some cases, under-maintained alleyways have become targets for illegal dumping because their untidy appearance sends the visual cue that disrespect for public rights-of-way is tolerated. Many residents complained of rodent infestations in alleyways as a result of trash buildup. Keeping alleys accessible, clean, and free of trash and overgrown foliage is not only a matter of public health and transportation; unkempt alleys also have negative impacts on the marketability of Hamtramck's available properties. For a number of reasons, the City should focus attention on this issue and work to restore Hamtramck's alleys.

## **3.2.1** Improve Code Enforcement of Alley Maintenance





Hamtramck municipal code requires that address numbers be displayed on alley-facing sides of buildings or fences so that code enforcement officers are able to ticket for violations easily. However, this requirement is frequently unheeded by property owners, which makes it difficult for enforcement officers to identify the addresses of properties whose owners should be ticketed for insufficient alley maintenance. A first step to resolving this problem

"WHAT A FILTHY ALLEY! THE DUMPSTER IS ALWAYS OVERFLOWING AND THE PAVEMENT HAS COMPLETELY DISINTEGRATED."

should be an awareness campaign with a multi-language public outreach effort: use local media and fliers in multiple languages to make the community aware that the City is getting serious about keeping the alleys clean and that it will ticket owners of properties that do not clearly display address numbers visible from the alley. Following the outreach effort, a comprehensive property survey of compliance with this ordinance should be undertaken by the City's code enforcement officers; any properties found not to be properly displaying addresses visible from alleyways should be ticketed and given a deadline to install address numbers as required. Similar to the City's procedure for requiring property owners to pay for any cost to the city for repairing or replacing sidewalks adjacent to privately owned properties, if a property owner fails to install address numbers facing the alley, the City should go ahead and install them and hold the property owner responsible for the cost of doing so.

## **3.2.1** Transform Alleys as Community Assets









Some residents expressed interest in going beyond the cleaning and regular maintenance of alleys by improving the look and feel of alleys, making them more of a community asset and socializing space for neighbors than just a place to store trash cans. Doing so could bring enormous benefits to the City as well if the alleys are improved with a mind for improved stormwater management. Pervious pavements, with proper construction and maintenance,

have the capacity to infiltrate up to 97% of surface runoff within a typical storm event. For every square foot of alley asphalt pavement that is replaced with pervious pavement, Hamtramck would be able to divert approximately 31 cubic inches of stormwater runoff from conventional treatment systems per year. Not only would this save the city thousands of dollars in runoff treatment costs per year, it would filter pollutants from the water while recharging groundwater systems and help to regulate flows in riparian corridors preventing erosion and flooding. Residents should also consider the potential benefits not only to their property value but also to maintaining the condition of their home by directing runoff away from their basements. Block Clubs or other community groups who plan to pursue resources to make transformative improvements to alleys should work closely with the City to ensure that the process of altering a public right-of-way goes through the proper channels in City Hall.



#### **PRECEDENT**

An alley off of 2nd Street in Detroit's Midtown has been transformed into a neighborhood asset and showcase of stormwater management best practices.

http://www.greengaragedetroit.com

3.3

### STRENGHTEN WALKABILITY AND SIDEWALK ACCESSIBILITY

Walkability is a major selling point for Hamtramck in attracting residents, shoppers, and visitors to the City. Throughout the planning process, residents emphasized repeatedly how important it is to them that, unlike most other parts of the Greater Detroit area, living in Hamtramck means being able to walk for most everyday shopping needs, errands, food, and entertainment. Pedestrian friendly streets and sidewalks are an important issue for Hamtramck's residents. For local business owners, a primary factor in catering to the needs of their customer base is pedestrian accessibility—not only on commercial corridors, but on neighborhood streets that serve as critical connectors from homes to commercial services. Many of Hamtramck's visitors come to the City for its shopping, food, and nightlife destinations. In order for the City to maximize the benefit of such visitorship to the local economy, it is critical to support multi-destination visits in which, for instance, a shopping trip includes a meal with maybe a drink or two at a live music show. This kind of local spending multiplier effect relies on the ease of walking from one destination to the next.

By far the most prominent theme that emerged from the online collaborative map, walkability issues accounted for 17% of comments contributed. Also, when asked what kind of sports and recreational activities they like to do, more community members who completed the Master Plan's Parks and Recreation Community Survey responded "walking" than they responded any other activity. In fact, 49% of surveyees mentioned "walking" as a recreational activity that they enjoy. So, in addition to the importance of improving Hamtramck's sidewalks and

LIWE HAVE GOT TO CONTINUE TO BUILD ON THE WALKABILITY OF THE TOWN. WE NEED GOODS AND SERVICES TO CATER TO THOSE WHO WALK AND ENHANCE WALKABILITY AS AN ASSET. 77

pedestrian infrastructure as a matter of transportation and public safety, the pedestrian friendliness of Hamtramck's streets and public spaces are also important to recreation activities and public health issues. For Hamtramck's senior population, walking is an important way to stay active and healthy. Furthermore, with a national childhood obesity rate of about 20 percent<sup>1</sup>, urban planners and policy makers across the United States are bringing the importance of encouraging kids to walk by improving the pedestrian environment to the forefront of urban planning and design core values.

Finally, the pedestrian environment isn't just about safely getting from point A to point B on two feet and getting some exercise while you're at it—clean and well-maintained sidewalks, highly visible crosswalks and other pedestrian-oriented streetscape furnishings are key to the City's image. In the Greater Detroit area and across the United States, successful communities are using walkability as a branding and image-making tool. Local examples such as Ferndale and Grosse Pointe are selling themselves as places where people feel comfortable going for a stroll and the simple act of walking for walking's sake is more of an actual activity here than most other places—a strategy that works to both attract residents and visitors.

For all of these reasons and many more, improved pedestrian friendliness and sidewalk accessibility—walkability—should be considered among the City's top priorities. "Walkability" is the combined effect

<sup>1</sup> First Lady Michelle Obama's Task Force Action Plan: Solving the Problem of Childhood Obesity Within a Generation.

of two physical attributes of the urban landscape: dense and varied land use patterns that locate a variety of types of uses within walking distance of one another; and smooth and continuous sidewalks wide enough to accommodate bi-directional pedestrian traffic and wheelchair users on paths free of utility infrastructure or other obstacles. Thanks to its density and village-like urban character, Hamtramck is naturally walkable in the land use pattern sense, but in the realm of the latter attributes—physical attributes of sidewalks and pedestrian-oriented infrastructure—Hamtramck has a lot of room for improvement.

## **3.3.1** Reduce Crossing Distances at Select Intersections

Reducing the crossing distance at intersections will make it safer for all pedestrians, but particularly those that need more time to cross, such as seniors, children, and those with mobility or visibility issues. Replacing the useless arc of asphalt around corners and in no-parking zones nearby with additional sidewalk space with generous curb ramps not only has the potential to reduce crossing distances by about 16 feet, they also provide a highly visible location for pedestrians to stand while waiting to cross the street. With typical curbs, onstreet parking can often obscure drivers' visibility of pedestrians at corners. Corner curb extensions increase the likelihood that motorists will see pedestrians when driving through or turning through the intersection, thereby reducing the danger of vehicle-pedestrian accidents. On top of the traffic safety and walkability benefits of curb extensions, they also provide additional sidewalk space for bike racks, stormwater retention and infiltration planters [as long as plantings don't act to obscure pedestrian/driver visibility], and seating-streetscape furnishings that might otherwise crowd the pedestrian zone if placed in the sidewalk straightaway. In addition to the curb extensions shown at Campau and Caniff in Figure 19, at Commor and Conant in

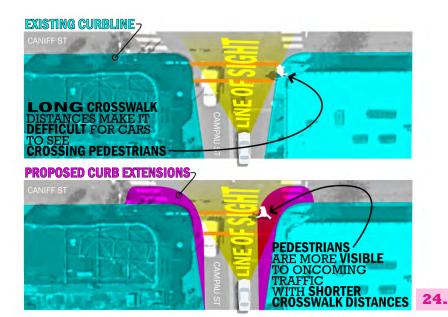


Figure 23, and at Yemans and Campau in Figure 33, curb extensions should be considered where possible for existing and future controlled intersections on Campau, Conant, Holbrook, and Caniff. A critical physical design consideration to keep in

mind when providing curb extensions is to ensure

that they do not intrude on bike lanes.

Of specific relevance to the issue of crossing distances, the Campau streetscape improvement project completed in recent years altered the shape of street corners between Caniff and Holbrook in a way that lengthens pedestrian crossing distances and enables motorists to speed through turns. The flaring throat widths simultaneously act to push pedestrians waiting at corners to cross the street back a few feet, making them less visible to drivers passing through the intersection. While in some cases the flared throat widths are justified in turn origination locations, the flared throat widths are utilized uniformly along this stretch of Campau, and are not justified when used in receiving lanes where addi-

tional space is not required to accommodate cars waiting to turn. In future projects involving street corner alterations, the City should require corners that are both walkable and maneuverable, closely reviewing any site-specific curb alteration designs to ensure that throat widths are kept to the minimum distance needed to accommodate the necessary traffic pattern.

Curb extensions diagram

## **3.3.2** Increase Access to Crossing Locations on Busy Streets



Hamtramck has a few major streets that have very limited crossing opportunities, a shortcoming that has encouraged the dangerous practice of jaywalking. Unfortunately, the phenomenon occurs most frequently on streets that have relatively higher volumes of traffic, most notably Campau, Holbrook, and Caniff. Increasing the number of crossing locations should reduce the jaywalking occurrences.

Pedestrians should be able to cross the street every 500 feet. An added benefit of establishing additional crossing locations in these streets is that they will also have the effect of slowing speeders, making for safer streets in Hamtramck.

In all of these cases, the proposed "crossing location" is a traffic signal that can stop cars to allow pedestrians to cross, whether a controlled intersection on continuous phase cycles or a HAWK signal that stops traffic only when a pedestrian request button is pushed to activate a "walk" phase. Crossing locations must have highly visible crossing striping, preferably zebra stripes or another more visible pattern rather than a pair of single stripes parallel to the crossing direction. In some cases, these proposed crossing locations would also make good candidates for curb extensions, an option that should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

#### > ADDITIONAL CROSSING LOCATIONS ACROSS CAMPAU

On Campau, pedestrians were frequently observed jaywalking in the area of the Hamtramck Town Center, where currently there is an 820-foot stretch between striped crossings at Holbrook and Hewitt. The proposed conceptual retrofit of Hamtramck Town Center [4.10.2] adds an additional crossing that includes highly visible pavement markings at the relocated shopping center entrance at its proposed alignment with Hanley. The crossing location is also an important connection between the proposed multi-user path around the perimeter of Town Center and the alley bicycle and pedestrian greenway connecting to Vet's Park.

The master plan team observed a number of occasions in which pedestrians took the right-of-way at the intersection of Campau and Yemans, particularly during Paczki Day. It is expected that there will be increased pedestrian activity at this intersection in the future, particularly with the redevelopment of the Shoppers World site. Improving the traffic con-

trol at this intersection for pedestrians should be considered, either with stop signs on Campau or the installation of a traffic or pedestrian signal.

There are minimal opportunities to cross Campau between Caniff and Carpenter. This is due to the existing width of Campau and the lack of intersecting roadways. Reducing the width of Campau will slow traffic down and make it more likely that drivers will yield to pedestrians, particularly in crosswalks. Consideration should be given to increasing the number of crosswalks on Campau after it has been calmed. Suggested crossing locations include at Commor and Zinow as well as mid-block locations between Casmere and Caniff and between Commor and Carpenter.

#### > ADDITIONAL CROSSING LOCATIONS ACROSS CANIFF

During the planning process, community members pointed out that Caniff is a particularly difficult street to cross because of its constant flow of traffic; the crowding of illegally parked cars at corners, which make it difficult for pedestrians to see and be seen; and the limited number of controlled intersections that give pedestrians a chance to safely cross the street. Instead of going a few hundred feet out of the way to cross the street, pedestrians are more likely to immediately cross the street to reach their destination. The concern for pedestrian safety is great on Caniff because of the number of students crossing the roadway. Consideration should be given to creating a new pedestrian crossing at Caniff and McDougall, as well as at Klinger and Bromback/MacKay.

#### > ADDITIONAL CROSSING LOCATIONS ACROSS HOL-BROOK

An additional crossing should be provided across Holbrook at Latham or a mid-block crossing at a location between Campau and Brombach to serve the residents and visitors to the senior living complex and patrons of Hamtramck Town Center.

## **3.3.3** Stripe Crosswalks to Increase Pedestrian Visibility



The prevalence of faded or completely missing crosswalk striping is a public safety issue that should be addressed throughout the City in the short term. Zebra striping should be considered the minimum visibility treatment for all new crosswalk striping—with a priority placed on intersections near schools-but the City should also consider using more visible kinds of striping and crosswalk graphic patterning to increase pedestrian visibility at higher traffic intersections or more complicated intersections where pedestrians are at greater risk. Consideration should be given to using thermoplastic for future crosswalks. Use of these materials do represent a larger investment up front, but they are much more durable than standard road striping and should remain visible without maintenance for several years, which often make them a more economical option in the long run.



Inlaid thermoplastic pavement markings [above] can be used to create custom colorful graphic patterns that last longer than typical road markings. Imprinted hot mix asphalt crosswalks [below] can mimic brick or other masonry patterns, but are much more economical and durable.

## **3.3.4** Continue Efforts to Improve Pedestrian Safety Near Schools





The Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services [ACCESS] in Hamtramck was recently granted \$600,000 through the United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's Safe Routes to School program—funds that will be used to improve sidewalks and crosswalks and install speed monitor displays at the Bridge Academy, Dickinson East Elementary, Holbrook Elementary, Kosciuszko Middle School, Frontier International Academy, and Hanley International Academy. The City and local community-based organizations should continue to pursue resources to improve walkability near Hamtramck's schools.

#### 3.3.5 Improve Sidewalks





Good pedestrian infrastructure will help encourage pedestrian activity in Hamtramck. Property owners are responsibility for the maintenance and condition of any sidewalk area adjacent to their parcels. Getting property owners to improve poor sidewalks on their frontage should be done through a mix of encouragement and enforcement. The City could require sidewalk repairs prior to the sale of real estate as well as enforce the City's Ordinances relating to sidewalks.

The City needs to take a more proactive role in fixing its sidewalks as a matter of reducing its liability—the Americans with Disabilities Act has allowed several successful lawsuits against cities that have allowed sidewalks to remain in states of disrepair. Community groups can do their part by channeling priority lists of especially troublesome locations

in the neighborhood through Block Club liaisons to the City, following up on property owners' compliance with sidewalk condition citations until the problem has been addressed.

## **3.3.6** Use Zone Approach to Improve Sidewalk Accessibility

Effective sidewalk design divides sidewalk widths into "zones," each with a specific purpose. Of principle importance, of course, is the "pedestrian zone," the effective width of the sidewalk that is used to actually convey foot traffic. While ADA accessibility requirements set minimum clear sidewalk width at three feet, in order to truly establish itself as a walkable city, Hamtramck should work towards the goal of establishing a continuous pedestrian zone with a clear walking path width of at least five feet. Shown in Figure 25, the pedestrian zone, or effective width, is the total sidewalk width minus the "utility zone" and, if there is a building façade right up next to the sidewalk, minus the "building zone" or "shy zone."

Some of Hamtramck's sidewalks require users to "worm around" [as one resident put it] an obstacle course of sidewalk obstructions—utility boxes, traffic light poles, street signs, planters, trees, and so on, have a tendency to stray all over the width of the sidewalk in Hamtramck, creating a winding road for pedestrians. For the able-bodied, the inconvenience is minor; but for the wheelchair-bound, injured, or anyone pushing a stroller or shopping basket, sidewalk obstructions create considerable barriers to sidewalk accessibility. The City should review engineering documents for construction projects and streetscape alteration plans to make sure that sidewalk infrastructure and obstructions

IE STUFF ON THE IDEWALK?



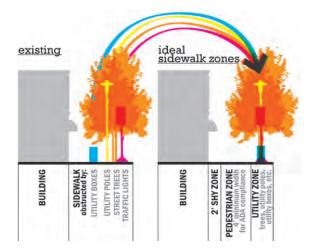
The southeast corner of Campau and Caniff is a prime example of a sidewalk that would benefit from a clear pedestrian zone.



are relegated to a "utility zone" off to either side of the pedestrian zone, preferably to the street edge where they can also contribute to the sense of separation from vehicular traffic.

Integrating trees and planters into Hamtramck's streetscapes—a highly recommended improvement—should be done within the utility zone [on the street edge] only in locations where sidewalk width is sufficient to accommodate a minimum planting width of three feet [preferably four] without sacrificing the recommended effective width of the pedestrian zone.

On streets that have buildings with a zero setback, a "building zone" or "shy zone" of the sidewalk is recommended, especially for commercial corridors. This zone, typically not more than two feet wide, is intended to allow a buffer between the pedestrian zone and the building façade to protect sidewalk users from colliding with opening doors. Businesses and home owners may be encouraged to place potted plants or long planters, benches, merchan-



25. "Zone" approach to sidewalk organization

dise racks, and so on, in the building zone in order to help establish the buffer.

## **3.3.7** Establish a Pedestrian Advocacy Group





Hamtramck should work with Detroit and other local municipalities to develop a regional pedestrian advocacy group bring greater attention to pedestrian issues in the Detroit region. A specific advocacy issue to take on would be to pressure the Michigan State DOT to take advantage of the new option under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act [SAFETEA-LU] to reallocate federal transit funding into the urbanized area grant program [Section 5307], which can be used to fund pedestrian improvements. A handful of U.S. States have taken advantage of the funds flexibility option, which essentially allows States to correct the under-funding of pedestrian mobility at the Federal Level.

#### **PRECEDENT**

For the past twenty years, WalkBoston, a nonprofit membership organization, has been dedicated to improving walking conditions in cities and towns across Massachusetts. WalkBoston provides a critical role of pedestrian advocacy and administers several programs to promote walking and improve walkability, including giving walking tours and producing walking tour maps of Boston's historic districts, offering lunchtime group walks to promote exercise during the work day, providing technical reviews of new developments and streetscape designs, holding best practices workshops and presentations for other groups who would like to learn about pedestrian issues and how to address them, running Safe Routes to School projects, and essentially acting as the primary pedestrian issue watchdog for Boston and beyond. With WalkBoston representatives at the table throughout Boston's Central Artery Project [the "Big Dig"], a multi-billion dollar project to relocate the previously elevated Interstate 93 underground through the Downtown Boston segment of the highway, pedestrian-centric design was guaranteed as a part of the process of reinventing the street surface.



#### 3.4

## ACCOMMODATE BIKES ON ROADWAYS

There is significant demand for improvements to the biking experience in Hamtramck. Biking-related insights and ideas accounted for 12% of the items contributed to the collaborative map by the community, making it one of the top five general themes of the collaborative map. Also, when asked which sports and recreational activities need to have more or better facilities in Hamtramck, respondents to the Master Plan's Parks and Recreation Community Survey ranked bike facilities second. Community members regularly brought up the lack of bike lanes and bike-oriented infrastructure in Hamtramck as a major concern. Through various channels of public input the need and demand for bike-oriented improvements was made quite clear.

Bikeability is a critical mobility issue. Local access to commercial services, food, and entertainment destinations is one of Hamtramck's greatest assets, but some of those trips for some residents may be more than a ten-minute walk, in which case they may be likely to drive. Reducing car usage for local trips is critical to taking full advantage of Hamtramck's density and village-like character. If Hamtramck's streets were more accommodating of bicycle travel, more residents may be more likely choose to ride bikes rather than drive for local trips. Beyond local trips, there are great opportunities for bike connections that lie just beyond the threshold of the City, which have the potential to create stronger ties between Hamtramck and other active centers outside the City. The recommendations in this section, as well as the following two sections, are meant to provide a clear and comprehensive set of strategies to make Hamtramck exceptionally bike-friendly.

## **3.4.1** Support the Implementation of the Hamtramck Bikeway





Since 2006. Preserve Our Parks, a Hamtramck non-profit dedicated to recreation and open space stewardship and improvement projects, has been developing plans for implementing bike routes in Hamtramck. The result of their efforts, The Hamtramck Bikeway, is designed to improve bike access to schools in Hamtramck as well as create connections to planned bike routes and trails outside of the city. This is a critical first step towards establishing a complete bike network throughout Hamtramck's neighborhoods. The planned route of the Hamtramck Bikeway is shown in Figure 26. At the time of the Master Plan process, the Hamtramck Bikeway's proponents had coordinated with Michigan Department of Transportation to bring the route to a stage of detailed plans, ready for implementation. With construction slated to begin in 2010, at this stage it is simply a matter of supporting the implementation through streamlining of processes at City Hall, at the County level, and wherever necessary.

## **3.4.2** Establish a Complete Bike Network

In order to establish a more complete bike network in Hamtramck, a number of additional routes are recommended, as shown in Figure 26. The principle features of the proposed additional bike network are described below, including additional detail about each of the locations notated with letters in the map:

The planned Hamtramck Bikeway will establish two east-west bike routes, on Holbrook and Hamtramck Drive, both on the south side of town. Additional east-west connectivity would greatly improve the bike network in Hamtramck. A pair of one-way

LETHIS IS A PANGEROUS PLACE TO BICYCLE. MOTORISTS SOMETIMES CHASTISE BICYCLISTS HERE TELLING THEM TO GET OFF THE ROAD. !!

shared lanes is proposed on Belmont and Yemans to provide direct access to the proposed I-75 bike and pedestrian bridge, labeled location **A** in the map.

The proposed bike and pedestrian bridge would repurpose the existing Yemans I-75 overpass. At present, the Yemans overpass serves a very minor and duplicative purpose: it is no more than a one-way access road to the southbound Chrysler Drive from either the northbound Chrysler Drive or Dequindre. Closing Yemans to auto traffic would displace a small amount of traffic a few hundred feet north onto the Caniff overpass. The general scheme of the Yemans bike and pedestrian bridge is shown in the context of a number of additional gateway improvements in Figures 4 and 6. A potential easement on the former BASF site would accommodate the extension of the multi-user path back up to Caniff to connect to Detroit. The bike and pedestrian bridge and BASF easement trail should be visible to I-75 traffic, bringing branding and identity benefits by sending passersby the message that Hamtramck is a bike-friendly place.

Of course, the purpose of the proposed bike and pedestrian bridge is not simply to imagine some other use for duplicative infrastructure or to improve the image of the city—its main purpose is to improve the network overall for bicyclists. If the bike network were to be implemented without it, cyclists wishing to cross I-75 to enter Detroit would have no choice but to go through Hamtramck's worst car accident hotspot, the intersection of Caniff and Nagel. The bike and pedestrian bridge would allow cyclists to bypass that intersection and its relatively



# high volumes of cross traffic and create a more continuous and direct route across Hamtramck. A series of HAWK signals would have to accompany the bike path in order to safely convey cyclists and pedestrians across Dequindre and the two I-75 service roads.

On the north side of Hamtramck, bi-directional marked shared lanes on Commor would establish a connection between the planned shared bike lane on Mackay and the proposed Conant bike lane. Because Commor becomes one-way west of Campau, a pair of one-way shared lanes would complete the

## BICYCLE PATH NETWORK

#### PLANNED HAMTRAMCK BIKEWAY

- → Two-way bike lane
- <-> Two-way shared lane
- Two-way shared lane, one contraflow direction
- « One-way shared lane

## PROPOSED ADDITIONAL BIKE NETWORK

- → Two-way bike lane
- **←→** Two-way shared lane
- One-way shared lane
- Two-way off-street paths
- ··· Detroit bike network connections

#### DETROIT BIKE NETWORK

 Proposed paths (Detroit Non-Motorized Master Plan)

#### EXISTING CONTEXT

- Two-way off-street paths
- Existing parks
- Existing schools
- Future schools

**26.** Potential Hamtramck bicycle path network

last leg of the east-west connection to Mackay. It is at this location, labeled **B** in Figure 26, where the proposed center median on the north side of Campau [3.1.2] would play an important role in conveying bike traffic. The median at this location should be designed in such a way that it acts as a landing pad for westbound cyclists who need to shift down to Zinow in order to continue across Campau. This can be accomplished by providing a HAWK signal crossing across the southbound lanes of Campau at Zinow.

The proposed reconfiguration of Conant [3.1.3] includes bike lanes, which is Hamtramck's best opportunity to create a continuous north-south bike connection through the City. A bike path would improve access to Jayne Playground and the future Inner Circle Greenway to the north. Critical to the safety of bicyclists, motorists, and pedestrians is the addition of a traffic light at location C [3.1.4] in order to better regulate traffic at the irregular intersection of Caniff and Commor.

A southbound complement to the planned leg of the Hamtramck Bikeway on Gallagher above Caniff can be provided on Charest, which would provide direct access to Hamtramck High School and Community Center, Horizon High School, Early Childhood Education Center, and the future charter school on Carpenter. The bike route could be diverted from Caniff by directing bike traffic along the alley behind the parcels facing Caniff between Gallagher and Charest, at location D in Figure 26. Cyclists could jog over along the alley to the signalized intersection at Gallagher and Caniff in order to cross Caniff safely. The City should consider exploring the feasibility of the resident suggestion that southbound bicyclists be given "a sanctioned way to ride the wrong way on Gallagher between the alley and Caniff" in order to bridge the gap between the alley and the crossing. Alternatively, an underutilized green strip next to Horizon High School could be a path

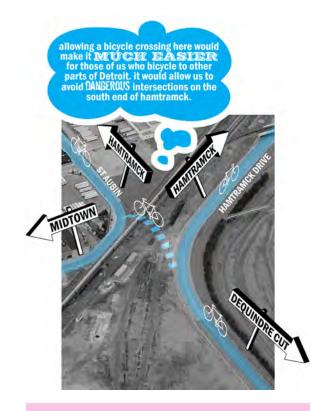
connection opportunity between the alley and the intersection for southbound bike traffic.

The proposed additional bike network ties the Brombach shared bike lane into the proposed multiuse path around the perimeter of the Henry Ford Medical Center/Hamtramck Town Center/senior living towers superblock. When creating the multiuse path [6.4.2] it is important to consider the connection points where the loop can connect to the greater bike network. The connection points at locations E and F should be signalized and have highly visible pavement markings and signage. The intersection of Brombach and Holbrook is already signalized, but the pavement crossing markings are currently inadequate. The long-term vision for enhancing Hamtramck Town Center [4.10.2] proposes moving the Campau entrance so that it aligns with Hanley Street. The new entrance would be a signalized intersection with highly visible crossing at location **F.** Creating a continuous connection from Hanley to Vets Park, the alley behind the primarily commercial buildings facing Campau on the east side of the street could become a bike-friendly route with signage and striping. This proposed alley bike route echoes the alley route planned as part of the Hamtramck Bikeway on the south side of Vet's Park, between Berres and Council.

Bike lane connectivity in the southwest part of town is critical to improving bike accessibility to Midtown and Wayne State and the Dequindre Cut to the south. The well-loved Dequindre Cut bike path in Detroit runs parallel to St. Aubin, extending from the Detroit RiverWalk north to Mack Avenue, just short of two miles south of Hamtramck. Plans to extend the rails-to-trails Dequindre Cut project even further north to the Edsel Ford Freeway would bring bikers right to Hamtramck's doorstep, but the segment of the rail line in Hamtramck is an active Amtrak route. So, in lieu of the option to extend the path within the rail line right of way itself, the

continuous route created by the Dequindre Cut could be extended through Hamtramck with bike lanes and shared lanes on St. Aubin and Lumpkin. As plans to extend the Dequindre Cut develop, the City should explore the feasibility of constructing a bike and pedestrian rail overpass at location **G** in Figure 26. This would allow bike traffic to continue directly north into Hamtramck, without having to be diverted along Hamtramck Drive and Campau on the south end of town.

The bike paths in Vet's Park [6.3.3] are a critical component of the overall vision for improving the park.



A bike bridge over the rail at location G would improve bike connections to and from Hamtramck.

### **3.4.3** Support Bike and Trail Planning to Improve Connections Outside of Hamtramck





There are several bike and trail advocacy groups in the greater Detroit area that are working towards establishing a comprehensive bike network. The City of Hamtramck, with support from local bike advocacy groups such as Preserve Our Parks, must be cognizant of these efforts and work to coordinate with them in order to ensure the continuity and connectivity of paths near and through Hamtramck. Some major opportunities to keep tabs on, as well as some potential connections to advocate for, are outlined below:

> The top priority in developing better bike connections to and from Hamtramck should be to establish safe and easy bike access to Detroit's Midtown and the Wayne State area. Several community members pointed out that there is no existing convenient route, and options are greatly constrained by limited access points across the rail lines and The Edsel Ford Freeway. The strong user connection between the two areas—some students of the Midtown area live in Hamtramck, and, likewise, Hamtramck is a food and entertainment destination for students living closer to the Detroit campuses—must be accommodated with stronger physical connections in order to allow the mutually beneficial relationship between Midtown and Hamtramck to continue to develop. The planned and proposed bike network set forth in this chapter creates connection opportunities for bike routes on the south and west edges of Hamtramck [which are also important for bike connections to Eastern Market, and the Russell Industrial Center], but the City must also take a strong advocacy role in supporting bike routes in Detroit to complete the connection.



## POTENTIAL

#### **EXISTING**

- Off-street path
- On-street route

#### PLANNED

- --- Off-street path
- --- On-street route

#### CONCEPTUAL

- Off-street path
- On-street route
- **DEQUINDRE CUT**
- CONNER CREEK GREENWAY
- INNER CIRCLE GREENWAY
- DETROIT RIVERWALK

27. Potential bike network context

- > The existing Dequindre Cut and its potential extension are a critical bike connection opportunity for the City to continue to keep track of. Establishing a continuous dedicated path between Hamtramck and the Detroit RiverWalk would bring great benefits to Hamtramck, not only in improving quality of life and access to open space amenities for Hamtramck residents, but also in drawing some tourist traffic from the RiverWalk to Hamtramck. The City should advocate for a complete bike connection, as well as ensure that the bike connection gateway to the City is safe, convenient, and visually welcoming.
- > The proposed Conant bike lane in Hamtramck will improve neighborhood connections Lasky Park and Jayne Playground north of Carpenter in Detroit, as well as provide a bike-friendly connection to the potential Inner Circle Greenway, but only for the one and a half mile length of Conant within the Hamtramck City limits. The City should advocate for the addition of bike lanes on the remaining quarter mile stretch of Conant in Detroit to complete the connection to Jayne Playground and Lasky Park. If plans for the Inner Circle Greenway begin to solidify in the coming years, the City should also advocate for the extension of bike lanes on Conant to close the remaining three-quarter-mile gap between the parks and the Inner Circle Greenway.

> Bike route planning efforts in the North End neighborhood of Detroit were at a preliminary stage at the time of the Hamtramck Master Plan process. As the North End continues its plan development, the City of Hamtramck should keep an open dialogue with bike planning efforts in the North End in order to ensure connectivity between these adjoining areas.

### 3.5

## CREATE A SAFE BIKING ENVIRONMENT

Along with accommodating bicycles on streets with striping and signage, improving bike safety and supporting bike culture in Hamtramck can be accomplished in a number of ways.

## **3.5.1** Provide Safe and Convenient Bike Parking





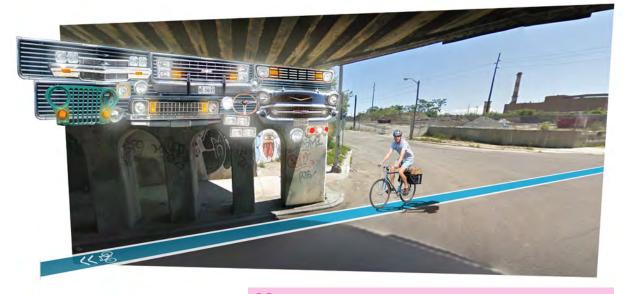
Paramount to supporting bike culture in Hamtramck is the provision of bicycle parking locations. When deciding whether or not to bike instead of drive to a destination in Hamtramck, one of the first things residents and visitors will ask themselves is, "what will I do with my bike when I get there?" Bike racks should be placed in high-visibility locations, as users will feel more comfortable leaving their bikes where there are eyes on the street to discourage bicycle theft. Commercial corridors, schools, and parks should be considered high priority locations for providing bike parking. The City should consider opportunities to provide bike corrals on Campau and Conant to support businesses on these commercial corridors. A bike corral is simply a row of several bike racks designed to accommodate 10 to 20 bicycles. Curb extensions could serve as bike corral locations, but the City could also consider

providing one or two bike corral locations within the on-street parking strip. Further image-making opportunities could be found in the actual design and production of bike parking infrastructure. Creative residents could be engaged in the design and fabrication of bike racks, bringing creativity to the streets, supporting local artists, and adding to the uniqueness of Hamtramck.

#### 3.5.2 Light the Way for Bikes



Bringing improved pedestrian-scale lighting to Hamtramck's sidewalks will help cyclists see more clearly at night, an important factor to consider in accommodating Hamtramck's student population and supporting alternative transportation options to the City's many nightlife destinations. Specifically mentioned by community members was the lack of lighting under the rail overpass on the south side of Campau, which currently serves as an important bike route connection to Detroit's Midtown and the Wayne State area. Lighting the underside of the overpass is another opportunity to bring some of the talents of Hamtramck's creative community into the public realm—the City could release a request for proposals for local artists to submit ideas for designing a creative lighting scheme for the underpass that both improves night visibility and pays tribute to some aspect of Hamtramck's history and identity. The conceptual rendering shown in Figure 28 imagines the underpass transformed with retrofitted Detroit-made vehicle grills and headlights used to both light the road under the rail bridge and speak to the importance of the automotive industry to the City throughout the past century.



**28.** Potential Campau underpass bike-oriented gateway improvements

## **3.5.3** Put Training Wheels on Bikers and Drivers





Public awareness and education initiatives must be undertaken to target both cyclists and drivers in Hamtramck. Faced with a complete lack of bicycle infrastructure, some cyclists in Hamtramck have improvised certain methods of bike travel that should be discouraged, such as riding on the sidewalk or on the street against the flow of traffic. Some explained that these practices occur because bike riders don't trust the driving skills of Hamtramck's drivers, many of whom are learning how to drive for the first time, or are learning how to drive in a new country with new traffic laws and patterns. Whether or not this is the case, this dangerous phenomenon somewhat exemplifies the issue—bike riders need to adopt safe and predictable riding behaviors, not only conforming to the intended directions of streets and bike lanes, but also practicing hand signaling, being conscious of traffic patterns, and complying with the phases of signalized intersections; and, likewise, all drivers need to be aware of bicyclists and be in the habit of constantly watching out for them on streets. Given the prevalence of planned bike routes on next to on-street parking. drivers and passengers alike must become aware of the potential "door trap," in which passengers on the driver's side of a parked car open the door right in the path of an oncoming bicyclist in the bike lane, a common occurrence that accounts for up to eight percent of bike-car accidents<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, anyone who rides a bike or rides in a car needs to be more aware of bikes and bike safety best practices.

To some degree, street signage and bike lane striping will help improve driver awareness of bikes on streets simply by making biking more visibly pres-

ent in Hamtramck. To actively promote safer driving habits and educate motorists about how to better share the road with bicycles, the City should pursue funding to launch public awareness and education campaigns using posters, billboards, newspaper ads, fliers, and safety handbooks made available in the multiple principle languages spoken by the City's diverse populace. Instilling safer biking habits among Hamtramck's cycling enthusiasts can also be accomplished through public awareness campaigns intended to encourage bikers to wear reflective clothing at night, always wear a helmet, teach cyclists the basic hand signals used for turning and stopping, and so on. A great place to start would be to translate The League of Michigan Bicyclists' "What Every Michigan Bicyclist Must Know" pamphlet, a primer on safe biking that, if translated, could become a highly useful resource to many immigrant communities outside the City of Hamtramck as well. The City might consider partnering with other municipalities or community organizations with large foreign language speaking populations to fund and distribute bike safety education materials. The initiative could be hybridized with initiatives to creatively activate vacant storefronts on commercial corridors [4.7.4] by engaging local designers to create a multiple-storefront, sprawling installation of bike safety awareness materials targeting drivers and bikers alike in multiple languages.

The City could also work to establish a local bike shop, not only to increase residents' access to refurbished bikes, parts, and repair services, but also potentially to host bike safety and maintenance classes, bike advocacy group meetings, serve as home base for group riding club outings, and engage local youth in mentor programs to teach them about bicycle mechanics. There are many successful models of such bike shops operating as non-profits—local community groups should be encouraged to establish something similar in Hamtramck.

#### **BACK ALLEY BIKES/THE HUB OF DETROIT**

Not far from Hamtramck, The HUB of Detroit, a full-service bicycle shop, serves as home base to Back Alley Bikes, which has offered free educational bike programs since 2000. Proceeds from the HUB bike shop supplement funding from the Tri-County Bicycle Association's DALMAC Fund to offer a range of primarily youth-oriented programs. For example, the Earn-A-Bike program rewards youths for learning about bicycle mechanics by engaging them in building and/or repairing a bike [with volunteer staff guidance] and allowing them to keep the bike when they have completed the three-session course.



## **3.5.4** Strategically Mobilize Police and Street Safety Liaisons to Ensure Safer Biking





Given the funding constraints the Police Department already faces due to limited resources, the Hamtramck Police might consider partnering with volunteers from schools and community groups to strategically deploy a force of traffic safety liaisons on the streets of Hamtramck according to peak vulnerable user accident hours, which happen to coincide with peak hours of criminal incidents in Hamtramck. Deploying some of the police force on bicycles during this time would also make drivers more aware of cyclists, as well as allow police officers to more easily identify drivers who are a danger to bike and pedestrian safety in Hamtramck. Such efforts should focus resources on busy streets and at intersections with high accident rates.

John Forester, Effective Cycling.

2

## **3.5.5** Continually Review Intersection Design for Bike Friendliness







Investigating crash data on a more detailed level would also allow the Police Department, bike advocacy groups, and City officials to identify troublesome intersections for vulnerable users and recommend them for intersection design evaluation. While this Master Plan proposes physical improvements to a number of specific locations in Hamtramck geared toward making streets more bikeable, it is likely that additional improvements will be necessary at other intersections. Compiling and analyzing detailed information about where and how accidents involving cyclists happen in Hamtramck is a necessary prerequisite to creating solutions to avoid them. The City and/or local bike advocacy groups should consider investing in computer software such as the Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Analysis Tool [PBCAT] tailored to the creation of a database containing extensive details associated with crashes between motor vehicles and pedestrians or bicyclists.

### 3.6

### **SUPPORT BIKE CULTURE**

## **3.6.1** Bring Bike Culture into the Spotlight

To really make bikes and biking stand out to the general population, staging bike-oriented events can go a long way. The City should create an annual bicycling event to showcase the City to the area's bicyclists. Bike-oriented spectacle events are another opportunity to showcase the talents of local artists, artisans, and designers—events in the vein of the Kensington Kinetic Sculpture Derby can tap into the creativity of Hamtramck residents to bring together cyclists and non-cyclists alike to admire just how far the imagination can take pedal-driven transportation. What's more, such events are likely to attract visitors from the Greater Detroit area, bringing the potential for increased local spending.

#### 3.6.2 Develop Local Bike Advocacy







While Preserve Our Parks has taken on an important role of bike advocacy in Hamtramck, there may be some logic in the creation of a sole purpose bike advocacy organization that has the capacity to work with the City to bring County, State, Federal, and foundation-sponsored transportation improvement resources to Hamtramck. A central bike advocacy group would also represent the City in coordinating with ongoing bike planning efforts in neighboring areas and with the many bike advocacy groups in the Greater Detroit area, as well as continue to assess the needs of the local cycling community and work to implement infrastructural improvements and develop programs and policies to improve bike safety and cultivate bike culture in Hamtramck.

The City and local bike advocacy groups should join advocacy groups statewide in encouraging the Governor and Michigan Legislature to pass Vulnerable User Legislation [Senate Bills 529 and 530 and



#### **KENSINGTON KINETIC SCULPTURE DERBY**

Since 2007, the annual Kensington Kinetic Sculpture Derby has invited entrants to parade their wild and crazy custom modifications of bikes and other wheeled and pedaled self-powered transportation machines in a wacky "race" through neighborhood streets in one of Philadelphia's hipster enclaves. Reaching the finish line [a goal secondary to that of creating a totally off-the-wall kinetic sculpture] is usually preceded by a major blooper moment as participants try to navigate their rides across a treacherous mud pit, which, as any cyclist would know, is pretty darn near impossible on two wheels. The Derby, organized by the New Kensington Community Development Corporation [NKCDC] as a part of the Trenton Avenue Arts festival in East Kensington, brings together thousands of bike enthusiasts, local artists, residents, and visitors and bringing greater exposure to Philadelphia's creative community, as well as promoting local bike culture.

House Bills 4958 and 4959], as well as encourage the establishment of legislation requiring that, in addition to fines and sentences imposed by the proposed Vulnerable User Legislation, anyone who is ticketed for any kind of reckless driving traffic infringement or who causes an accident involving a bicyclist would be required to complete a bicycle safety awareness class, thereby targeting the more careless drivers who are more likely to become the cause of injury to cyclists.

Another pivotal role of bike advocacy is to make a case for the great need for bike improvements specifically in Hamtramck. For instance, looking at crash frequency data averaged over the six-year period from 2004 to 2009, car accidents involving bicyclists occurred in Hamtramck at a rate of 3.96 accidents per square mile per year, compared to 1.06 accidents per square mile per year in Detroit and 0.63 accidents per square mile per year for all of Wayne County. Therefore, it's four times more likely that a cyclist will get hit by a car in Hamtramck than in Detroit, and over six times more likely that a vehicle-bike accident will occur in Hamtramck than in Wayne County in general. The critical conclusions to draw from this are that, firstly, Hamtramck should be a priority area for bike infrastructure improvements in Wayne County as a matter of public safety; and secondly, bike safety improvements targeted to address this markedly increased density of vehicle-bike accidents in Hamtramck would have a much greater impact than they might in Detroit or elsewhere in the County. The City and local bike advocacy groups should strive to make full use of this source of data and others to advocate for bike-oriented improvements and pursue resources for implementing bike infrastructure and programming.

The Michigan Department of Transportation is currently in the process of implementing its 2009 – 2012 Michigan Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Ac-

tion Plan, with goals and objectives in the areas of best practices, behavior, policies and legislation, and awareness. The City of Hamtramck, in partnership with local bike advocacy groups, should reach out to MDOT [as well as Wayne Country, SEMCOG, the Kresge Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation, and others] to learn about available resources and increase awareness at higher levels of government and among local foundations of the challenges cyclists face in the City of Hamtramck.

#### 3.7

## ADDRESS PARKING ISSUES

Parking emerged as a very hot topic among the comments posted on the online collaborative map and in discussions with residents during the Master Plan process. Local perspectives on parking span a complete spectrum—from "it's not a problem" to "this is one of the biggest problem with living in Hamtramck." The City should consider a number of ways to address parking issues in Hamtramck.

IIWE NEED MORE PARKING ON CAMPAU, ESPECIALLY FROM CANIFF TO HOLBROOK BECAUSE THERE ARE FEWER SIDE STREETS TO TURN DOWN TO LOOK FOR PARKING SPACES WHEN CAMPAU SPACES ARE FULL. ??

It's a misconception that parking is bad here—there's ample parking here, there's just a culture of laziness.

When school lets out, people just park anywhere—they're all over the place!

44 Parking is the biggest issue for many store owners but i have never had one customer complain about parking. 77

## **3.7.1** Develop Smart City-Wide Parking Policy

Parking is a difficult issue for almost every city in the United States. It is a constantly fluid operation that is dependent on a number of variables, such as land use, time of day, type of users, and price to name a few. Understanding and addressing Hamtramck's parking issues in a smart, efficient manner will allow the City to make educated future decisions about parking and land use.

The City should consider conducting a parking study to accurately assess the operations of its parking system during weekdays, weekends, and special events. This should include a study of the demand for on- and off-street parking, level of enforcement, and the turnover of all parking spaces. This will provide the City with a wealth of data and determine where parking is needed and how it can be accommodated and managed in the short term and long term.

The parking study should also address methods to improve the perception of parking in Hamtramck. For some, there will never be enough parking; others will voice the polar opposite opinion. Once the parking study is complete, the City needs to educate the general public on the parking issues using language and visuals that everyone can understand.

## **3.7.2** Address On-Street Residential Parking Constraints

Many cars parked on residential streets were observed to have flat tires [or no tires at all]. Scarce on-street parking spaces in Hamtramck should be liberated from junk cars, inoperable cars, and abandoned cars. Under Section 72.070 of the Municipal Code, City Council is authorized to designate residential permit parking areas, but allows the issuing of "a residential parking permit to each resident of a designated residential parking area

for each vehicle leased or owned by the resident upon presentation of a current vehicle registration with the appropriate address..." Authorizing the issuing of unlimited permits for each resident—and issuing them free of charge—is a missed opportunity to discourage parking congestion and generate revenues. The Council is urged to revisit this policy and consider instituting a resident parking permit system by which the first two permits per housing unit are very affordable [\$10 a year, for instance], but the third parking permit sticker costs considerably more [say \$50], and so on. A pricing scheme that better reflects the short supply of parking would likely relieve some congestion.

Fines should be given for cars parked for long periods of time without a permit, and the City should eventually tow them if necessary.

## **3.7.3** Improve Signage Directing Drivers to Parking Lots

Signage should be improved to direct drivers to the City's public parking lots to reduce the amount of cruising for on-street parking.

3.8

# IMPROVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

The auto-centric "Motor City" mindset has firmly established car travel as the default since the disappearance of street cars in Detroit in the 1930s and 1940s. Given the scale of degeneration of the urban landscape in the past few decades, active centers have dispersed, making distances between origins and destinations seem even farther apart. The loose fabric of the Greater Detroit Area neces-

sitates the car, to some extent, especially considering the recent trends in eliminating bus routes and scaling back schedules of bus services in the Greater Detroit Area. However, these days it's common knowledge that many of us have to reduce our reliance on car travel, and for many of us, it simply isn't a viable option. Significant segments of the Hamtramck population fall into categories that rely on walking and public transportation: those who can't afford the high costs of car transportation, seniors, and many members of immigrant populations who prefer not to drive or have not yet learned how to drive. Hamtramck's density and walkable access to commercial services and local entertainment certainly make it an ideal place for a non-driver to live. However, it's easy to feel isolated in Hamtramck if you don't have a car and don't know your way around the bus system: Hamtramck emergency response units have reported receiving several non-emergency calls from non-native households requesting transportation to medical appointments in Midtown Detroit.

For all of these reasons and more, improving access to public transportation options in Hamtramck is essential to increasing the mobility of existing residents, workers, and visitors, and supporting the City's continued economic growth. In part, it's a matter of increasing awareness of public transportation options, which in this case means offering existing route and schedule information in a multi-language format and thinking about ways to improve the experience of riding public transportation. In the bigger picture, however, it's a matter of increasing mode options and matching ridership demand with desired destinations, necessitating advocacy and outreach strategies to ensure increased accessibility in Hamtramck.

## **3.8.1** Create Design Standards for Bus Shelters



A number of residents requested that bus shelter design and placement be addressed as a part of the Master Plan recommendations. Some bus shelters in Hamtramck, particularly on Conant, are poorly designed and situated. In some cases, the bus shelter takes up too much space on the sidewalk, leaving insufficient room for a wheelchair to pass on the sidewalk. Others pointed out that Hamtramck's bus stops are unattractive eye sores detracting from the image of the City. The Community and Economic Development Department should engage the City Council and DPW in reviewing best practices in design guidelines and codify its own set of guidelines, potentially with the help

for some reason this bus shelter occupies the ENTIRE SIDEWALK, making it impossible for many people to use it at all. it seems like a MISILALE.



of a transportation engineer consultant. In general, the guidelines should keep a number of factors in mind when it comes to bus shelter placement and design:

#### > SIDEWALK ACCESSIBILITY

Bus shelter placement should not reduce the effective width of the sidewalk to less than 5 feet. The proposed Conant streetscape improvement project [3.1.3] reallocates enough of the roadway to sidewalk space that it would be possible to provide the same size bus shelters without intruding upon the suggested pedestrian zone minimum width.

#### > LIGHTING

Bus shelters need to be well lit both on the interior and in the sidewalk areas surrounding the shelter.

#### > VISUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Design bus stops in an attractive and attentiongrabbing way both to contribute to the quality of the public realm and to increase visibility of the bus stop, thereby encouraging greater ridership. A short term strategy could be to use the bus shelters as temporary installation spaces for local artists. Bus shelter advertising should be considered to generate revenues, as well as promote local businesses.

#### > INFORMATION

Graphic treatments to the bus shelter surfaces should boldly display the route numbers accessible from the bus stop. Clear route information and time schedules should be available in multiple languages. The bus shelters could be used to direct visitors to local destinations using fun maps of Hamtramck created by local artists and design professionals.

#### > VISUAL PERMEABILITY

Bus stop users will feel more comfortable using a bus stop if its walls are mostly visually permeable, allowing them to see through the shelter to observe any activity that may be going on outside.

## **3.8.2** Advocate for Improved Transit Connections to Detroit

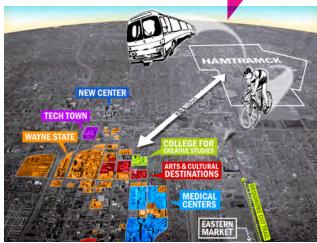
One of the challenges Hamtramck faces in establishing convenient public transit options for its residents, workers, and visitors is that it is landlocked. so to speak, within Detroit, which has had to cut back transit services due to budgetary constraints in the past year. A frequently voiced complaint by Master Plan participants regarding public transit access is the lack of connectivity to Eastern Market and the Midtown area of Detroit, which includes Wayne State, the College of Creative Studies, Detroit Medical Center, and a number of arts and cultural and entertainment destinations. Though the two dense and active centers of Hamtramck and the Midtown area are only separated by two miles at most, the lack of easy transit connections between them are surprising. The Cities of Hamtramck and

WIF TRANSPORTATION WERE IMPROVED WE WOULD HAVE MORE PEOPLE LIVING HERE. MANY CARPOOL TO SOME FACTORY JOBS. IF TRANSPORTATION IS BETTER, THE HOUR COMMUTE TURNS TO TEN MINUTES. THIS IS A REAL BARRIER TO JOBS. ??

Detroit must work cooperatively to improve routes and transit services more reflective of ridership demand, in this case between Hamtramck and Midtown, New Center, and Eastern Market. Improved connectivity would likely benefit both local economies, as well as reduce vehicle miles traveled.

## **3.8.3** Create a Hamtramck Transit Center

City officials should explore the feasibility of establishing a small, centrally-located, covered, well-lit station where all buses lines [as well as community-based transportation providers and jitneys, potentially] stop along their routes in Hamtramck. Not only would a Hamtramck Transit Center be an excellent way to promote greater public transportation use for those who regularly visit, live in, or work in Hamtramck, but also a convenient way to get people into the city during high-attendance events when parking is nowhere to be found. A Transit Center would ideally provide direct and regular access to the future Woodward Avenue light rail line, Midtown, and Eastern Market.





An improved public transit experience may help support the growth of the local student population and would be an excellent accompaniment to the proposed educational program component for the redevelopment of the former Shoppers World site [4.10.1]. A Transit Center would bring greater visibility to the availability of public transportation options—supplemented by a clearly posted schedule and map of transit options and destinations offered in multiple languages, the Transit Center would greatly improve the mobility of Hamtramck's foreign-born population. Finally, the potential economic development benefits that a Hamtramck Transit Center would bring should make this idea that would be of interest to the Detroit Regional Chamber, SEMCOG, DEGC, and other governmental and non-profit entities that exist to develop the Greater Detroit Area's economy.

A number of potential locations should be considered, including Hamtramck Town Center, the cityowned parking lot behind the Shopper's World, and underutilized unbuilt lots on the north side of Campau and along Conant. Integrating a small coffee or newsstand or other small convenience retail component into the same structure or general location would provide natural surveillance over the Transit Center, likely making transit users feel safer.

#### 3.8.4 Advocate for Rail Transit

The Regional Transit Coordinating Council's 2008 Comprehensive Regional Transit Service Plan proposes establishing a commuter rail line on the existing Amtrak rail line along the west edge of Hamtramck to connect New Center to Pontiac in the intermediate-term phase, between 2013 and 2015 [labeled **B** in Figure 29]. In a more intermediate term phase, between 2016 and 2020, the plan proposes a second commuter rail line on the Grand Trunk rail line, which cuts through the south end of Hamtramck, to connect New Center to Port Huron [labeled **A**]. The City of Hamtramck would have



REGIONAL TRANSIT PLAN Full completion phase; 2026 - 2035

- Arterial rapid transit
- Bus rapid transit
   Bus rapid transit/Light rail transit
- rail transit

  Light rail transit
- Light rail transi
- ---- Commuter rail

much to gain from the potential implementation of either of these projects, assuming they would include a stop in the City of Hamtramck. Creating access to rail transit in Hamtramck would be a great benefit to existing residents and workers, and could also help attract new residents and businesses to locate in the City. Furthermore, in part due to the prevalence of former industrial, currently underutilized land along these two rail lines in Hamtramck, there is plenty of opportunity for transit-oriented development on the south and west edges of the City. The City's Department of Community and Eco-

nomic Development should take on a role of advocacy, ensuring that Hamtramck is on the map, so to speak, in discussions of taking these plans forward and implementing the planned commuter rail lines.

## IMPROVE SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

Some of Hamtramck's street signs have faded over time and others are too small or too poorly placed to be adequately visible. In addition to being a public safety issue, insufficient signage also does a poor job of directing visitors to public parking lots. The City's Department of Public Works should undertake a survey of signage to evaluate the condition and placement of existing signage, as well as consider hiring a consultant to outline recommendations for improving Hamtramck's wayfinding systems. A signage and wayfinding improvement plan will help determine estimated costs, a necessary first step to allocating and raising and allocating funds to implement new signage.

Block Clubs could assist the City in its signage evaluation by taking photographing and cataloguing street signs that are in need of replacement in their neighborhood.



This barely legible "Road Ends" sign near Vet's Park has certainly seen better days.

ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS IN A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT TO MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL OF HAMTRAMCK'S CREATIVE AND PRODUCTIVE ECONOMY. CULTIVATE LOCAL BUSINESSES WHILE ATTRACTING OUTSIDE INVESTMENTS TO CREATE NEW JOBS AND INCREASE TAX REVENUES. PROMOTE THE CITY'S UNIQUE AND DIVERSE CULTURES AND LOCAL DESTINATIONS TO THE GREATER DETROIT AREA AND BEYOND. PROMOTE, SUPPORT AND EXPAND THE ARTS.

Numerous interviews were conducted with stake-holders and interested community members who had something to say about Hamtramck's economic challenges and opportunities. Combined with our own assessment of Hamtramck's economy, a sustainable economic development plan for Hamtramck must focus on a combination of making economic development a priority for the city, workforce training, continuing to promote the city's main commercial activity, supporting small business and leveraging local culture and the arts.

For a City with such a small area, Hamtramck has a lot of cultural, commercial, and creative activity going on. The following series of recommendations that fall under the umbrella of cultural and economic development might have been developed for a city twice the size of Hamtramck. It is not intended to serve as a blueprint for all-inclusive implementation, but rather as a universe of actions that the City and local organizations and entrepreneurs should consider undertaking as stakeholders in the continued vitality of the City of Hamtramck.

As the City and local agents of economic, commercial, and cultural development continue to build capacity and secure resources, this chapter of the Hamtramck Master Plan will continue to provide ideas.

#### 4.1

### STRENGTHEN THE STRUCTURE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CITY HALL

Hamtramck has devoted significant resources to economic development activities, and has many individuals and organizations committed to enhancing the city's economy. These parties have made great strides individually, but are challenged by limited resources and the lack of a clear, consistent vision shared by all stakeholders in the City. This master planning process is helping by setting an agenda for the future. However, real success will ultimately require a broader awareness and commitment to economic development goals and activities across the entire City. This means making economic development a part of everyone's mission, establishing shared goals, and ensuring already limited resources are used to pursue opportunities that have broad support and a likely return on investment. Therefore, developing an organizational structure within the city government that makes economic development a priority across all offices and departments, and helps to align agendas, resources, and visions is a critical starting point. A concerted effort is needed to ensure that the various agents of economic development in Hamtramck are communicating well and are all working towards the same mission and goals.

## **4.1.1** Elevate the Economic Development Corporation

For Hamtramck to realize the full potential of its many assets, economic development must be a priority for all City departments and offices. Specific strategic decisions and action steps must be made at all levels to ensure that Hamtramck is meeting its

goals. Refocusing the Economic Development Corporation [EDC] with a mission to oversee and direct all aspects of economic development in the City of Hamtramck will provide the leadership and coordination necessary to take on many of the initiatives in this chapter. The EDC should be composed of the Mayor, a representative from City Council, the city Economic Development Director, the City Manager, a public safety official, the Finance Director, other appropriate city employees, the Downtown Development Authority Director, the Brownfield Authority Director, and a number of representatives from the business and education communities.

The EDC should meet monthly, receive and give reports and updates to the other various city boards and commissions, and direct the Economic Development Department. The EDC should coordinate with other economic development agencies and entities in the region and state, and ensure that Hamtramck is seen as a community where commerce, industry and innovation are of top priority. The group's mission should be to reach consensus on an economic development vision for the city; to set strategic economic development goals that have broad support; and to ensure that all city offices and departments work jointly to achieve these shared goals. Finally, the EDC should have a web presence to share news of its efforts with the community, ideally as a part of the City of Hamtramck's future revamped website.

## **4.1.2** Strengthen the Case for Locating in Hamtramck



Hamtramck's Department of Community and Economic Development has made great progress in the last year in producing marketing materials to promote Hamtramck as a desirable place to establish a business or develop real estate. The City should

MBUSINESSES THAT USUALLY FOLLOW ARTISTS AND CREATIVE PEOPLE AREN'T COMING—THEY LOOK AT OUR INCOME LEVELS AND PECIPE IT'S NOT WORTH IT. !!

continue to develop its marketing materials in order to really sell Hamtramck's best assets, both in printed form and on the City's website: its cultural richness, its dense village character, its sense of community, and, perhaps most importantly, its ability to draw visitors regularly from the Greater Detroit Area and beyond not just for large attendance events, but even just to get to unique destination shops in Hamtramck.

It's critical to get potential investors to look beyond the typical "primary market circle" and a "secondary market circle" numbers and take into account many of the unquantifiable advantages Hamtramck has over other places, but making the numbers work in the favor of the City would also help. The Department of Community and Economic Development should prepare supplementary marketing materials to make a solid case for locating in Hamtramck, highlighting the following points and quantifying them wherever possible:

#### > HAMTRAMCK'S SECONDARY MARKET IS THE WORLD

Local cultural heritage destinations and culturally-specific retail destinations draw visitors from all over the world. Regular visitorship from Chicago and all over the Midwest supplements even more frequent visitorship from residents of the Greater Detroit Area. Hamtramck is a destination for consumers who live well beyond the standard secondary market radius, so the potential customer base for a new business in Hamtramck is likely well underestimated. Some local small business owners keep informal records of customers from abroad—if more businesses were in the habit of doing so as well, or if another method of estimating local im-





The proprietor of the Polish Art Center proudly displays a list of the hometowns of her recent patrons, which demonstrates visitorship from several states.

pacts of visitor expenditures were used, this information could be a powerful selling point for potential investors.

#### > A PENNY SAVED IS A PENNY TO BE SPENT ON SOME-THING ELSE!

Housing costs in Hamtramck are much lower than in Detroit's inner ring suburbs that have similar walkable commercial corridors and dense urban fabric. Therefore, although the median income is lower in Hamtramck, there may be more room for consumer expenditures in the primary market than a typical market analysis might suggest thanks to savings on housing costs.

#### > A PRIDE OF PLACE ONE MUST EMBRACE

Many Hamtramck residents have a great deal of local pride. Likewise, Hamtramckans are highly loyal to local businesses and would prefer to spend their money in town. If commercial services were expanded and improved, retail leakage would be captured and more dollars would stay local. If new commercial establishments and real estate development projects can tap into Hamtramck's unique identity, they will enjoy a strong local customer base while also contributing to the character of the City.

#### > LOCAL CONVENIENCE IS KEY

Because Hamtramck is so highly compact and its residents are used to walking [and households are larger with fewer cars, on average], new businesses that fill in the retail gaps are likely to benefit from a more or less captive market.

## **4.1.3** Continue and Expand Opportunity Site Marketing Efforts





In the past year, the Community and Economic Development Department has identified target sites for redevelopment and prepared printed information briefs about the properties [particularly Brownfield sites] for the purpose of quickly informing potential investors of opportunity sites in Hamtramck. The target sites list is an important first step in expanding the City's opportunity site marketing efforts.

The City's website should offer a comprehensive database of available commercial and industrial properties and potential business development opportunities. The website should provide basic information about the size, shape and condition of the property, the age and condition of structures and improvements, the applicable zoning and development regulations, known environmental contamination, applicable incentives, and contact information, and should offer a site mapping feature. There should be a link to this resource from the main page of the City of Hamtramck website, and from the Downtown Development Authority and other appropriate websites. Doing so will illustrate for a broad audience the higher priority that the entire city is placing on economic development.

In addition to marketing to the world beyond Hamtramck, remember to keep the Hamtramck

community informed about business expansion opportunity sites. Special "home court advantage" efforts should be made to ensure that everyone in Hamtramck is informed of opportunities and knows where they can find more information. Efforts should include signs placed on commercial properties directing people to the website for access to property information, press releases to local print and on-air media regarding available sites, and regular reports to the business associations on opportunities to develop and expand businesses throughout Hamtramck.



#### **ATLANTA EMERGING MARKETS**

To get a sense of what developers are attracted to in on-line site marketing tools, take a look at the Atlanta Emerging Markets website from Atlanta, Georgia. Although Hamtramck is a much smaller market than Atlanta, and has different economic development assets, this website is an example of current best practices in marketing a community to potential business developers.

http://www.atlantaemergingmarkets.com

## **4.1.4** Set a Consistent Approach to New Development

Sometimes it can be difficult to reach a consensus on change. In Hamtramck, the range of viewpoints held by such diverse communities adds an additional challenge to the process of getting residents and business owners on board with proposed development projects. The City has an abundance of redevelopment sites that are bound to create controversies when potential projects come along. Thinking ahead, the City should consider engaging the community in setting forth site-specific redevelopment guidelines for identified opportunity sites based on the themes and goals of the Master Plan and the more specific ideas of residents and local business owners. Determining a "universe of acceptable possibilities" in terms of preferred land uses, reuse scenarios, and redevelopment goals for each site in partnership with local stakeholders in advance before a proposal comes along will make it much easier to attract the right types of development and judge whether a particular proposal will be met with community resistance. The guidelines should not be prohibitively specific or otherwise unrealistic.

## **4.1.5** Advocate for Neighborhood Improvements

A highly simplified urban development theory proposes that "retail follows rooftops." In other words, small business owners, commercial developers, and chain retailers alike must recognize the importance of having strong residential neighborhoods in close proximity to their enterprises, and prefer to locate in areas where new residential development is happening or where neighborhoods are on the upswing. Developers and business owners want to reduce their risk by locating new commercial development and businesses in desirable, improving, and growing communities, where it's more likely that more potential customers will be found. For

that reason, neighborhood improvements and residential development are a part of the purview of Hamtramck's agents of commercial and economic development. As an example, the Ann Arbor DDA is highly involved in residential development, as they recognize that putting rooftops right next to retail [or on top of it] will make for stronger commercial corridors in Ann Arbor. Local business owners, the EDC, the DDA, and other local agents of commercial and economic development should make it a part of their agenda to advocate for and support the attraction of new residents and the retaining of existing residents by helping to strengthen neighborhoods and directing resources toward the implementation of the recommendations set forth in Chapter 5.

## 4.2

# STRENGTHEN AND RETRAIN THE LOCAL WORKFORCE

The modern American workplace depends upon a highly skilled workforce. Even most entry-level occupations are layered with safety procedures, specifications, and best practices that employees must learn, understand, and use. Many American jobs require college training, and middle income occupations are increasingly attainable only through specialized degrees and graduate studies. Referring to Attributes of Hamtramck's Workforce, we recall that Hamtramck's population is significantly undereducated compared to the surrounding communities. To provide opportunities for its residents to reach their full potential and to ensure a robust economy, Hamtramck must address its need for a better educated, more highly skilled workforce.

#### 4.2.1 Assess Employer Needs

A strong workforce whose members possess high quality skills and a strong work ethic is an asset that Hamtramck must develop and market to build the robust economy its residents want. To provide opportunities for Hamtramck workers to compete in the changing economy, we recommend that the EDC and/or local service providers develop a process to assess the workforce needs of Hamtramck's current employers and project the workforce needs of its future employers. We recommend that partnerships with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the Michigan Department of Energy, Michigan Works, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, the Detroit Regional Manufacturing Skills Alliance, Tech Town, Automation Alley, and other workforce and economic development agencies be developed to provide a clear picture of the skills and educational needs of current and future employers.

#### 4.2.2 Promote Workforce Readiness

There are three distinct populations that generally need assistance with workforce training: youth and recent high school graduates, displaced workers and the underemployed, and those in the workforce looking for further advancement. In Hamtramck, the latter two groups in particular may possess additional barriers to success due to language skills deficiencies if they are recent immigrants to the United States.

In Hamtramck and Wayne County, there are a number of agencies that are providing workforce training opportunities for Hamtramck residents and employers. These include the public and private schools, area colleges, universities and trade schools, the Michigan Works One-Stop Centers, Wayne County EDGE, and the Detroit Economic Development Department, among others. While all of these agencies and the services they offer

are vitally important to Hamtramck's future, none of them has as its mission to increase opportunity and prosperity for Hamtramck residents and businesses. This mission falls to Hamtramck alone. Thus, there needs to be an oversight agency that will ensure that Hamtramck residents can easily access these resources, and that the specific needs of Hamtramck's residents are being met. We recommend that the Hamtramck EDC fill this need via a subcommittee or task force that will identify and evaluate the needs of Hamtramck's workforce and develop the linkages to these resources and work towards the development of additional workforce development tools as needed. Specific services for immigrants should be a central focus of workforce readiness resources in Hamtramck.

#### > BUILD ON STRONG HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Hamtramck High School is already offering its students opportunities to explore several technical fields. These programs should be promoted and leveraged by the city and additional investment into these and other successful programs should be encouraged. High quality educational enrichment programs open the door to business developers looking to locate in an area with strong skills and interest in promising fields. Commercial and industrial designers, accountants and auditors, various computer and mathematical occupations, and various management occupations are all High Demand Occupations for Wayne County.

Hamtramck's Frontier International Academy is a charter school serving students in the 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. It offers a core curriculum that is consistent with the Michigan School Code, and an Arabic Language program, the goal of which is "to educate students in Arabic language and culture... to make them knowledgeable and active members of a global society." There are recommendations

later in this section to develop a cultural and language studies center of excellence that this high school program, as well as other schools that develop supplementary language programs, should be directly linked to.

After-school workforce readiness training for high school students should be offered as a part of the programs offered by the proposed Hamtramck Youth Center. In the meantime, such a program could be offered in the Hamtramck High School Community Center or at a local service provider. The program could help link high school students with part time jobs to build work experience or full-time employment after graduation, potentially by establishing relationships with universities nearby.

## > PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISPLACED WORKERS AND THE UNDEREMPLOYED

Displaced workers and underemployed workers have access to a variety of resources to help them retrain and build their skills to more effectively compete for new economy jobs. Michigan's No Worker Left Behind program provides funding for educational expenses for pursuing a degree or occupational certificate in a high-demand occupation, emerging industry, or in an entrepreneurship program.

Unfortunately, during times of high unemployment the resources for worker retraining are insufficient to cover the need. Applicants find that waiting lists are long and some programs are full. This is more common in the Metropolitan Detroit area than in other parts of the state. The Hamtramck EDC and local non-profit service providers need to work with the Michigan Works Association and Wayne County's Economic Development Growth Engine [EGDE] to ensure adequate resources for Hamtramck residents.

Job clubs and networking services and events for the unemployed are also valuable resources we recommend the City of Hamtramck promote. We recommend that the Hamtramck EDC encourage and promote the development of job clubs and other networking services for the unemployed and underemployed. This may be done through community and faith organizations active in the community. For example, the Indiana Catholic Employment Network provides support and resources to unemployed and underemployed people through missions at five central Indiana parishes.<sup>2</sup> Job Clubs are also common at public libraries and even at coffee houses and restaurants.

The Hamtramck School District's alternative education program recently reopened for 16-19 year olds. The School Board would like to expand the program to become an adult education center as well, offering instruction in culinary skills, carpentry, and other skilled trades. Securing adequate funding to make the idea of a job training center a reality has proven to be a challenge, especially given the budgetary impacts of increasing numbers of charter schools. The School District should partner with local community-based organizations to pursue funding together and jointly operate the program.

http://www.frontier-academy.net/curriculum

## FOSTER ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

According to the Small Business Administration, small businesses [defined as independent businesses employing less than 500 people] represent 99.7 percent of all employer firms. Small businesses employ over half of all private sector employees and have generated 64 percent of all new jobs over the past 15 years.3 To ensure continued growth and prosperity, Hamtramck must ensure that small businesses are being created in Hamtramck, and that new businesses have optimal opportunities for success. This will generate new jobs, generate additional earned income tax revenues for the City, and build a business base that is less dependent on a small number of large companies than Hamtramck has been in the past. For entrepreneurs to flourish, a variety of supports and resources are needed.

Promoting an entrepreneurial culture in Hamtramck should be a primary goal of the EDC. Entrepreneurs are inherently risk-takers, who marshal their own and others' resources to create products and services and often create new jobs. Many communities and governmental agencies have developed support platforms to assist entrepreneurs with financial and knowledge resources.

EDC should consider the benefits of adopting a strategy of "economic gardening." Economic gardening is a philosophy based upon the growing body of research that indicates that most new jobs are produced by small local companies. Economic

14 HAMTRAMCK IS A NICHE COMMUNITY OF LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS—HOW CAN WE CULTIVATE THAT? 17

gardening emphasizes entrepreneurism and small business assistance for new development, rather than recruitment. While recruitment, or "economic hunting," can make for great headlines, attracting an outside business to a small inner-city community like Hamtramck is hard to do, and the return on investment for recruitment activities can be small and disappointing. Locally grown businesses are also thought to have more emotional investment and loyalty to a community than recruited businesses do. Economic gardening focuses on the assets already in a community and provides assistance to local business developers.<sup>5</sup>

With a little capacity development, the DDA could also take a stronger role in helping local businesses grow. While it is unlikely that the DDA, as it currently exists, has the resources and capacity to expand its programs, the DDA could look to the Ferndale DDA as a model organization for supporting small business development. The Ferndale DDA has a number of business assistance programs, including "business consultations," in which business development support professionals make onsite interviews with participating business owners to provide consultation services and recommend strategies to increase foot traffic, give tips on developing a business plan, and advise on marketing and branding initiatives.

#### opub/ted/2007/jun/wk4/art02.htm

To learn more about economic gardening, view the Small Business Administration's paper Economic Gardening: Next Generation Applications for a Balanced Portfolio Approach to Economic Growth at <a href="http://www.sba.gov/advo/research/sbe\_06\_ch06.pdf">http://www.sba.gov/advo/research/sbe\_06\_ch06.pdf</a>, and the Edward Lowe Foundation at <a href="http://www.edwardlowe.org">http://www.edwardlowe.org</a>.

## **4.3.1** Create a Business Services One-Stop in City Hall





Starting a new business is a complicated process, especially for first-time entrepreneurs. To simplify the steps one must go through to start a business in Hamtramck, the City should evaluate the existing process by which this occurs in City Hall and simplify and streamline the process. Some members of the community have expressed that the process is unclear and often requires several trips to various offices in City Hall in order to get the job done. Ideally, the process should be dealt with entirely at one location and the number of trips necessary should be minimized. The "One-Stop" center could be simply a matter of creating signage and educational materials for an existing office in City Hall that is easily seen from the main entrance and that has the appropriate personnel available to answer questions about the process. Reducing trips can be done, in part, by offering prospective business owners a "road map" to starting a new business in Hamtramck that outlines the entire process along estimated time frames along the way, from initial application to business license, advice regarding how and where to get any required documentation, and answers to frequently asked questions. The One-Stop could also offer informational materials that would be useful for new business owners after the business is up and running, such as how and where to pay taxes, the process of license renewal, relevant excerpts from the municipal code, and so on. Of course, it is critical that these materials be translated and made available in the major native languages of Hamtramck's immigrant communities.

In addition to helping new business owners procure a business license and directing non-native speakers of English to useful entrepreneurial resources,

http://web.sba.gov/faqs/faqindex.cfm?areaID=24

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, http://www.bls.gov/

the Business One-Stop would be a great opportunity to increase awareness of the City's façade improvement program, DDA programs and initiatives, local subsidies for commercial development, and other business support services and assistance programs.

The City should advertise the services offered by the Business One-Stop in local newspapers and other media in order to increase awareness of the location and purpose. The "road map" to starting a new business process should also be clearly outlined on the City's website, along with any other One-Stop informational materials.

#### 4.3.2 Expand Local Food Businesses

Detroit has often been referred to as a "food desert," where access to fresh fruits and vegetables and food options other than Coney Islands are few and far between. By contrast, Hamtramck is a "food oasis," where an abundance of small businesses and chain enterprises alike offer a wide variety of products and prepared meals from a world of cuisines, from small grocers to importers of culturally specific food products to artisanal specialty shops to restaurants, and so on. Hamtramck has certainly made food a central part of its identity and local economy, and there is great potential to build on this local strength and further capitalize upon both the entrepreneurial and culinary talents of Hamtramckans, and the reputation the City already has for offering tasty treats. In fact, expanding local food businesses may be the City's best opportunity to practice the strategy of "economic gardening."

MAMTRAMCK HAS ALWAYS BEEN A LUNCHTOWN FOR WORKERS BOTH IN TOWN AND SURROUNDING AREAS. 77

11 WE MAKE OUR OWN SALSA—WE'RE TRYING TO GET IT ON THE MARKET AND WE'RE SO CLOSE! WE WANT TO MAKE A FACTORY TO PRODUCE IT HERE IN HAMTRAMCK. ??

Keeping idealist opportunity in check, the reality is that Hamtramck's role as a "lunchtown" has diminished over the past few decades, as employment numbers in areas in close proximity to the City have dwindled with the closing of several industrial plants. Many of Hamtramck's food businesses have been forced to close as a result, but many still remain, and many new food businesses, particularly ethnic food businesses run by local immigrant families, have recently been added to the menu of offerings in Hamtramck. In order to stabilize and expand local food businesses, a number of initiatives should be considered by the City, local food businesses, and local community-based organizations.

#### > MARKET THE CITY'S FOOD PRODUCTS AND DESTINA-TIONS

The City should actively market Hamtramck's food scene by hiring a marketing and branding firm to create a graphic logo and advertising blitz campaign to bring more hungry consumers to Hamtramck's table. Employment centers, campuses, and active centers within a short distance of Hamtramck should be targeted for "Eat Hamtramck" advertising campaigns. Billboards and signage along Hamtramck's I-75 frontage would help to lure more commuters off the freeway to bring home a slice of Hamtramck for dinner. Visitors and business travelers who are unfamiliar with the area are less likely to discover Hamtramck's delicious reputation on their own. The Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport would be an ideal location for a marketing campaign to target visitors. A number of additional marketing opportunities should be explored.



#### > CREATE ACCESS TO SHARED RESOURCES AND START-UP SPACE FOR FOOD ENTREPRENEURS

Kitchen incubator projects across the nation have established shared production space for food entrepreneurs to lower the barriers to creating a new food business, which often requires prohibitively expensive equipment and more space than a typical home-run business can accommodate. Hamtramck should explore the potential of establishing a kitchen incubator locally, ideally with a storefront component that offers samples of what's cooking in the back. The organizers of the Eastern Market kitchen incubator project might be a good resource for guidance and potential collaboration. Close consultation with County health inspectors would be necessary to ensure that the space will be designed and maintained above and beyond their standards.

Entrepreneurial support services, such as training on how to manage a small food business and how to scale up, and technical assistance with basic business management, should be a key component of the project. The kitchen incubator facility could also be outfitted with food trucks to bring incubator food business products out into the Greater Detroit Area, local farmers markets, and other events.



#### > PUT HAMTRAMCK'S MEALS ON WHEELS

Encourage local restaurants and food businesses to go mobile, offering their products to the Greater Detroit Area with the help of food trucks, ideally marked with an "Eat Hamtramck" or similar branding graphic to promote Hamtramck's food scene while they are on the road. The food trucks could be highly profitable in areas of Detroit that are underserved by food options. Detroit's Midtown area would likely be a good market to tap into. Food trucks could be used during Hamtramck events to showcase the variety of foods made locally.

#### > MARKET HAMTRAMCK'S PROCESSED FOODS

The Michigan Brewing Company out of Webberville, Michigan, has already recognized that the name "Hamtramck" can sell a food product—hence, its production of "Hamtramck Beer," which has no apparent production connection to the City of Hamtramck itself, aside from the name. Local restaurant owners have expressed the desire to mass produce food products to be sold on the shelves of grocery stores and at farmer's market stands. The opportunity here is to further promote the "Eat Hamtramck" brand and increase awareness of Hamtramck's edible offerings. The City should work with local food businesses to develop shared branding graphics promoting locally-produced foods.

#### > KEEP IT LOCAL

Locals already value fresh fruits and vegetables, but those that are available to them in Hamtramck's produce stands are mostly sourced from the large-scale farming industry, much of which comes from food producers in Canada. Establishing a food co-op in Hamtramck as an outlet for local products of the Detroit urban farming movement would provide residents with an opportunity to contribute to the local economy while also reducing the carbon footprint of their food sources and taking part in the reuse of vacant land. A local food co-op would also establish a local signifier of emerging national trends in sustainable food culture, bringing imagemaking benefits to the City as well.

#### > MAKE IT GLOBAL

Hamtramck should make efforts to position itself more squarely in front of the camera lens of cable networks and national media who regularly feature the culinary uniqueness of every nook and cranny of the United States and the world at large. Once featured on a popular Travel Channel series, Anthony Bourdain's No Reservations, a long-standing destination restaurant in Hamtramck was mistakenly identified as a "Detroit" restaurant. The City should work to increase its national exposure and get Hamtramck on the cable television food map. The City could host competitive eating events [paczkis, anyone?] and cooking and baking competitions in conjunction with its regular schedule of large attendance events, guaranteeing a large and lively live audience for a potential television production. The effort would help bring more food tourists to Hamtramck to contribute to the local economy while pleasing their palates at the same time.

#### > HOLD AN ANNUAL HAMTRAMCK RESTAURANT WEEK

Hamtramck's events draw people far and wide. No other city in the Greater Detroit area can offer the range of unique food that Hamtramck can. Holding a restaurant week that features the diversity and quality of local food would be a fantastic way to build on the city's brand and promote local business. If organized and properly marketed, a restaurant week would not only bring in thousands of hungry patrons to Hamtramck's food destinations from the region, it could also potentially capture the eye of the Food Network, Travel Channel and national food magazines. To build an awareness of the event, the first Restaurant Week should be organized in concert with an existing event that already draws crowds, such as Hamtramck Blowout or the Labor Day Festival.

#### **PRECEDENT**

Kitchen incubators, such as Mama's Kitchen in Los Angeles and La Cocina in San Francisco, provide licensed locations for small food businesses, caterers and street vendors to prepare food. The growing popularity of food trucks around the country provide budding food entrepreneurs with a lower entry point into the food business. Since the recession, aspiring food truck entrepreneurs have inspired kitchen incubators and other organizations to tailor technical support to this growing group. La Cocina and the Street Vendor Project of the Urban Justice Center in New York provide workshops on street food vending rules and regulations to help entrepreneurs who want to start a mobile food business. A kitchen incubator is coming soon to Detroit's Eastern Market, where the ongoing market expansion includes a teaching kitchen and classrooms as part of an Education Center and a community kitchen to incubate food-related businesses and create local iobs.



## RE-ESTABLISH ROLES FOR THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND MARKETING AND EVENTS COORDINATION ACTIVITIES IN CITY HALL

Though technically there is a Hamtramck Chamber of Commerce, for all intents and purposes, it has essentially become a defunct entity in recent years. Likewise, the City's Events Coordinator position was unfortunately eliminated in summer 2010 due to Hamtramck's current budget crisis. As a result, there are needs not being met in the realms of events coordination, marketing, and business organization in Hamtramck-important tasks that require ongoing attention and long-term planning. The annual Labor Day Festival is one of the City's most loved and highly attended annual events. and is typically organized by the City's Events Coordinator. If it were not for the dedication of two local Hamtramckans who volunteered to organize and market the event, the 2010 Labor Day Festival would not have happened. As events planning and marketing are such important components of Hamtramck's economic opportunity, not to mention an important part of the commercial corridor experience, it is critical that the City not be forced to rely on ad hoc community volunteerism to fulfill these roles for too long. When the City's finances have stabilized, City Council should find room in the budget to re-establish the role of the Events Coordinator, under a newly re-engergized Chamber of Commerce that has the capacity to set its own agenda and generate revenues to make itself financially sustainable. It is recommended that the City establish this umbrella organization to fulfills a number of roles at the City level:





## **4.4.1** Represent the Interests of All Businesses in the City

Ensure synergistic relationships between local businesses, the DDA, the Conant Street Corridor Improvement District, the EDC, and the City. Provide services and make resources available to all Hamtramck businesses—while there are a number of resources available for businesses on Campau in the DDA boundary, but there are other commercial areas in Hamtramck that are important to Hamtramck's vitality and should be supported as well.

#### 4.4.2 Sell the City

Market Hamtramck and its unique destinations to visitors, potential customers, and potential new businesses. Further marketing-related recommendations are included in the following section.

#### 4.4.3 Be Green

Launch a green business awareness campaign and make large-attendance events environmentally-friendly. That means no Styrofoam cups in restaurants and during festivals!

## **4.4.4** Buy Local

All communities face increasing retail leakage, whether from neighboring communities or from online shopping options. Activities that will combat this trend include promotional campaigns encouraging residents to buy local; ensuring that parking and pedestrian facilities are accessible, easy to use, appealing, and safe; balancing retail with food and beverage businesses; introducing art and cultural attractions to the business districts; and developing clusters of similar businesses to attract comparison shoppers.

The Chamber of Commerce should work with the Community and Economic Development Department, the DDA, and other local business organizations to revive the "Buy Local" branding and marketing campaign. At one time, the City had developed "Buy Local Hamtramck" stickers for distribution to customers and locally-owned businesses. In addition to producing and distributing "Buy Local Hamtramck" stickers and other promotional materials to customers and stores and having a presence at local events and festivals, the "Buy Local Hamtramck" campaign could include:

- > Production of thematic maps and lists of the shopping districts and businesses, with phone numbers and web sites, in print and on the City's and other relevant websites.
- > Working with local news media and bloggers to publish regular local interest articles regarding Hamtramck small businesses, as well as featuring media links on business district websites, and the city's Business in Hamtramck web pages.
- > Giving early notice of annual community wide events to local businesses to encourage their participation with sales, sidewalk cafes, special promotions, new product introductions, appropriate entertainment, and thematic decorations.
- > Holding periodic Shop Hamtramck sales events offering special promotions and a festive atmosphere.

> Marking the dollars spent locally. During local events, get vendors and local stores to stamp currency bills with a "Buy Local Hamtramck" rubber stamp. Weeks later, when Hamtramckans see the "Buy Local Hamtramck" stamp on a bill, they will be reminded to keep their money in the local economy; likewise, the stamped dollars that migrate outside the City would become marketing vehicles targeting potential visitors to the City.

#### **4.4.5** Fill Out the Events Calendar

Organize official City events, facilitate event coordination for non-official events in Hamtramck, and market Hamtramck events in the City and beyond. Work with the proposed Arts and Cultural Council [4.12] to coordinate periodic arts events. One of the advantages of having Events Coordination and Chamber of Commerce activities under the same roof is the opportunity to take advantage of the

"domino effect" events have on local businesses. The Chamber of Commerce and Events Coordinator should work with local businesses to help them create strategies to capitalize on local events.

## **4.4.6** Turn Up the Volume on Hamtramck Blowout and the Local Music Scene

Work with local bars and music venues to create a live music events calendar website with upcoming shows in Hamtramck paired with music clips for previewing the talents of booked acts. Supplement the musical previews with venue location info and directions, as well as offer email list sign-ups to allow users to stay updated on local music shows. Expand and promote "Blowout" and "The Hammies," Hamtramck's local music awards ceremony. Get kids involved in Hamtramck's music scene with a battle of the bands for youth under 18.

#### **BUY MICHIGAN NOW**

The Buy Michigan Now Festival was held for the second year in Northville, featuring Michigan businesses, products and performers. The three-day festival is part of a larger statewide campaign to promote awareness of local products in order to maintain existing jobs and attract new ones, diversify the economy, increase the tax base, and reduce the carbon footprint of purchases.







#### 4.4.7 Expand Multicultural Events







Work with community leaders in Hamtramck's diverse population to expand multicultural events in Hamtramck, not only to market the City as a global community, but also to foster cross-cultural relationships among neighbors. During the Master Plan Process, community members mentioned the need especially to bring kids together across cultural lines to reduce tensions in local schools. Events such as the International Bazaar, Paçzki Day, the Bengali Festival, and many others should be expanded and promoted in partnership with the City.

Though Hamtramck's Polish population has shrunk over the course of the past two decades, Polish traditions are still firmly embedded in the City's identity, a fact that continues to attract thousands of visitors to the City each year. The City must make efforts to maintain this identity in addition to welcoming new diverse populations in order to continue to benefit from the economic effects of this visitorship. For instance, the City should work to bring back the weekly Balkan folk dances that were held at a local Polish restaurant.



The 2010 Bangladeshi Festival, held on Conant Avenue in Hamtramck for the second year in a row, attracted a crowd of 5,000 to the City. Photo: Ian Perrotta, Hamtramck Review.

## 4.5

## EXPAND AND PROMOTE THE CITY'S BRAND[S]

The proposed recharged Chamber of Commerce and the Hamtramck EDC, in concert with the Community and Economic Development Department and the DDA, should hire a branding and marketing consultant to develop a range of identity graphics for the City of Hamtramck that simultaneously reflect the many facets of Hamtramck's character and maintain some graphic integrity and interrelatedness. As a lower-cost, more grassroots alternative, the City could engage local artists and designers in participating in a design competition to develop a graphic identity for the City and hold an open vote to determine the winning designs. In addition to developing a series of graphic identities to promote the City's brand, the City should actively employ these identities through a number of marketing and advertising strategies, as suggested below.

#### > IT'S GLOBAL

To the world beyond Metropolitan Detroit, Hamtramck might best be summed up as "Old World." Its image is of ethnic Polish Americans, engaged in automobile manufacturing. A visit to Hamtramck will quickly reveal that that's not what Hamtramck is today. Hamtramck is actually a diverse community of people with Asian, African, Middle Eastern, European, and American ancestry who are engaged in a variety of creative and innovative occupations and industries. A review of the Hamtramck School District's language and ethnicity statistics demonstrates the degree to which Hamtramck's population has diversified. Hamtramck needs to project

6 Hamtramck Public Schools, http://www.hamtramck.k12.mi.us/Accomplishment&Development/Accomplishments&Development.htm

WE NEED TO THINK OF WAYS OF GETTING HAMTRAMCK BACK ON THE MAP. I THINK THERE'S ENOUGH LOCAL DESTINATIONS RIGHT NOW TO BUILD UPON—WE JUST NEED TO KNOW HOW TO DO IT. IT'S PARTIALLY JUST A MATTER OF REBRANDING AND REMARKETING HAMTRAMCK. ??

this current image to the region and state to be able to attract new investment and interest. This identity can and should be built into the City's graphic identity and marketing materials. The Wicker Park-Bucktown Special Service Area's branding and identity graphics in Chicago provide an excellent example of how a diverse neighborhood can express its multicultural character through its branding and marketing graphics.

Beyond integrating its distinct multicultural nature into its graphic identity, there are many ways the City can sell Hamtramck as an international city and emphasize Hamtramck's connections to other cities all over the world. For one, Hamtramck could establish itself as an official "sister city" to a number of international cities reflective of the origins Hamtramck's foreign-born or first- and second-generation families. Another way of bringing creativity to the streets while promoting Hamtramck's international identity might be to establish "sister city videolinks"—live feeds of street scenes from each city broadcast and projected life-size in a storefront in the sister city-simulcast on cross-continent storefront screens and internet streaming sites featuring both street scenes, similar to the Virtual Street Corners public art project in Boston.

#### > IT'S ONE OF A KIND

Sometimes branding and marketing graphics have a tendency to appear a bit too plastic and generic and lack a substantive connection to the real experience of a place. Hamtramck has a lot of character to draw from to create a truly "vernacular" graphic identity. Many place-based branding campaigns have successfully used existing graphic elements of the urban landscape as a departure point for developing a distinctive graphic identity.

#### **SEVENTH AVENUE SHOWS ITS COLORS**

Phoenix-based urban designer Daniel Petrucci developed a graphic identity project for the Seventh Avenue Merchant's Association with the goal of using custom street infrastructure and branding strategies to revitalize the commercial corridor in Phoenix. The concept included a number of graphic and formal elements that took inspiration from both the natural and urban landscape surrounding the corridor. For instance, Petrucci recognized that many businesses along the strip made use of the font "Akzidenz Grotesk" in signage and storefront displays, and, in turn, proposed that it be integrated into street infrastructure graphics to establish the typeface as a unifying element of the corridor. Likewise, the corridor identity adopted a color palette based on urban colorist Cecelia Conover's profile of "the harsh light of the desert sun in the district's paved environment and developed a set of compatible colors."1

1 http://www.asu.edu/research/researchmagazine/2004Winter/Wnt04p6-9.pdf

#### > IT SOUNDS GREAT

The City should engage local musicians and bar and music venue owners in developing a graphic identity for Hamtramck's music scene. Hamtramck's music-themed branding could be employed on street lamp banners, posters, t-shirts, stickers, social media applications, and other advertising vehicles to promote music events such as Blowout; and should also be used for the proposed music scene website. Many cities have used branding and graphic identity to promote music scenes such as Kansas City's 18<sup>th</sup> and Vine area, defined by its relevance in jazz history; and Nashville, whose Music Row corridor has been a formative corridor in the history of country music.

#### > IT'S INSPIRED

Hamtramck is home to a large and growing community of artists, designers, writers, poets, and all varieties of creative professionals. In order to create an identifiable brand to promote Hamtramck's art galleries, studios, creative businesses, and artrelated events, the City should draw upon local talent to develop a unifying graphic identity to represent Hamtramck's creative side.

#### > IT'S DELICIOUS

Hamtramck's identity as a food destination offering a wide array of global cuisines should be represented by a food-themed logo or series of logos to encourage residents and visitors to "Eat Hamtramck" [4.3.2].

Tying together these various graphic identities representing the multi-faceted identity of the City, a marketing kit should include several elements such as:

- > Brochures highlighting Hamtramck's assets.
- > Linked websites for the City, its business districts, and local organizations that present a unified portal to Hamtramck's businesses and organizations.

- > Inserts showcasing Hamtramck's global cultures, creative offerings, and manufacturing products.
- > An annual calendar of community events.
- > Thematic maps of the community and its districts.
- > Case studies of Hamtramck businesses.
- > Real estate, industrial and business investment opportunities.

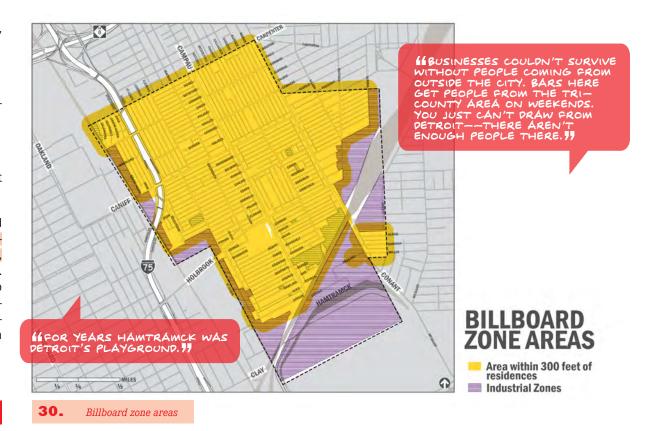
While printed material is the standard, and should be an integral part of any marketing toolbox, online resources are critical for attracting younger, technically adept business developers and visitors. A community without an effective, appealing web presence is not going to be able to compete in today's highly competitive markets. Information similar to that provided in print should be provided on the web, with interactive tools where appropriate.

## 4.6

# INCREASE VISITORSHIP & SHOWCASE THE CITY'S ASSETS

## **4.6.1** Actively Market Hamtramck as a Destination to Residents of Detroit and Inner Ring Suburbs

Hamtramck's greatest opportunity for increased visitorship is the population of the Greater Detroit Area. One way to increase awareness of Hamtramck, its unique identity, and its variety of local destinations is to improve Hamtramck's presence on the I-75 corridor, making the City more visible to the thousands of commuters who pass by Hamtramck each day. In addition to improving perception and



the image of the city, eye-catching landscape transformations and public art installations recommended for the areas along Hamtramck's I-75 frontage [1.1.5] would also be a critical tactic for increasing visitorship to the City.

Additionally, the City should consider utilizing bill-boards along I-75 to promote the City, especially in advance of large City events, such as the Labor Day festival, the International Bazaar, Hamtramck Blowout, Paczki Day, and so on. Two existing billboards along I-75 within the city limits could be utilized for this purpose, but the City could also explore estab-

lishing a third billboard on the southern tip of the former BASF site, which, according to Hamtramck's municipal code, is essentially the only possible opportunity location for new billboards in the City.<sup>7</sup> The establishment of the third billboard site could be a revenue-generating component of the BASF site redevelopment strategy.

<sup>7</sup> In Hamtramck's Municipal Code, Article XI, Section 5.03 states that "Billboards shall be permitted only in industrial districts and shall be no closer than three hundred feet from any residential district. Existing nonconforming billboards may be maintained, but cannot be expanded, enlarged, or extended."

## **4.6.2** Market Hamtramck to Detroit Visitors

The Hamtramck DDA recently paid for the production of a promotional commercial for distribution to Detroit hotels, which run such ads on the "menu" channel of television lineups in hotel rooms. However, the commercial was never distributed for use in Hotels, likely as the result of the DDA's constrained budget. Advertising Hamtramck's offerings to Detroit tourists and visitors should be a priority strategy in boosting "day-trip" visitorship in Hamtramck. In addition to reconsidering using hotel television advertising as an advertising agent, Hamtramck should distribute marketing brochures targeting tourists to Detroit hotels and promote its destinations in hotel marketing magazines produced for tourist visitors. Hamtramck business owners should also advertise in such marketing magazines to help get Hamtramck on tourists' trip itinerary. The Chamber of Commerce, DDA, and local business owners should consider putting together a free or reduced cost "night out on the town" in Hamtramck for Detroit concierges, hotel managers, valets, and others who have direct access to Detroit tourists in order to showcase Hamtramck's many destinations and encourage Detroit tourism industry representatives to promote Hamtramck as a destination not to be missed by Detroit visitors.

## **4.6.3** Crowdsource Local Tour Guidance





Local knowledge and existing public transportation routes could be utilized to connect visitors to local destinations in Hamtramck and better inform visitors about the City's rich history and varied cultures. In lieu of setting up a costly tour bus operation and hiring a production company to produce audio tours of Hamtramck, which would likely not be able to recover operating costs through profits, the City could crowdsource Hamtramck tour route ideas to the creative community by hosting a competition to create the most interesting/most delicious/most historic/most hilarious/tipsiest audio tour that can be completed using only public transportation and short walking distances. Making the audio tours compatible with portable personal digital audio players and available for free download on a revamped City website would allow public voting to determine winning entries, using viral media and pop culture tactics to promote local destinations.

## **4.6.4** Improve Access to Information about Local Destinations



Many local business owners identified the lack of information about Hamtramck's destinations as a major impediment to visitorship in the City. Shop keepers, waitresses, and bartenders are regularly asked, "so, what else is there to do in Hamtramck?" Thankfully, many of these local experts have willingly filled the void of visitor information by directing people to local restaurants and other destinations in Hamtramck. In order to more easily connect visitors with Hamtramck's destinations, brochures and maps detailing locations and offerings of local restaurants, bars, cultural destinations, historic sites, music venues, shopping destinations, and public parking locations should be made available in a variety of languages and distributed to local businesses to be passed on to customers. This would be quite helpful to lead visitors to Hamtramck's less obvious destinations.

Destination maps, visitor information, promotional materials could be used to adorn vacant store-fronts along Campau, as well as installed in bus shelters. A longer-term solution might include providing digital interactive information kiosks at the intersections of Campau and Caniff; and Campau and Holbrook, potentially implemented as a part of streetscape improvement projects proposed for those two locations.

The rebooted City website [2.9.3] should provide plenty of information for visitors to the City, including profiles of local destinations, an events calendar, links to local music and art listings, and basic transportation information.

#### THE INSIDE STORY ON DETROIT



Detroit's Inside Detroit Tours is a non-profit organization whose mission is "to promote Detroit as a preferred destination to live, work and play by educating the public about Detroit's history, culture, community and livability." The organization offers low-cost thematic bus tours of Detroit destinations, historic landmarks, bars, and local shopping, creating easier avenues of discovery in this large and dispersed city where tourists might have a tougher time than in most tourist destinations with distinct tourist districts offering a more "composed" and immediately legible experience for tourists.

#### **4.6.5** Launch a Hamtramck Chotchkies & Top Notch Tees Pop Up Shop

"Pop up" stores have recently become a trendy retail phenomenon across the globe: small retail businesses, small-scale custom fabricators, craftsmen, web-based retailers, galleries, arts studios, and a number of similar entrepreneur or creative endeavors that have a small retail component coordinate to set up a temporary shared storefront space or other retail location for a short period of time. The "pop-up" is typically heavily advertised using traditional media, online social networking applications, and other viral marketing strategies to spread the word. The underground aspect and time-limited availability of the retail location are major motivators that generate foot traffic and create a buzz about the pop-up. It's just as much a strategy to market the City [or commercial district, as the case may be] and its offerings as it is an opportunity to offer local entrepreneurs and artists greater exposure to concentrations of potential customers.

Hamtramck's small business owners, creative entrepreneurs, and local artists and designers should work together to organize Hamtramck Pop-Up Shops in Detroit and outlying active centers in conjunction with major events that generate a convergence of visitors or potential consumers upon a specific area, such as Midtown's Dally in the Alley, the Detroit Electronic Music Festival, the North American International Auto Show, major convention events,



Potential "chotchkies" to stock up a Hamtramck Pop Up Shop are already available in local stores.

and so on. The Hamtramck Pop Up Shop would sell "Hamtramck"-branded souvenir-type "chotchkies"— post cards, magnets, t-shirts, stickers, and so on—alongside gallery space displaying artworks and crafts produced by Hamtramck's creative community, and specialty food items representing the global cuisines available in Hamtramck, creating an extremely condensed microcosm of the City's varied cultures and products. Stocking the Pop Up Shop with Hamtramck visitor information and fliers for upcoming events would be a must.

## **4.6.6** Preserve and Expand Visitor Destinations

In the 1930s, Hamtramck had seven movie theaters and over 200 bars—more bars per capita than anywhere else in America. The continued disappearance of destinations in Hamtramck must be prevented. The City should consider establishing preservation agreements with private owners of local landmarks in order to ensure their long-term

maintenance and contribution to Hamtramck's cultural identity, as well as establish new visitor destinations in the City.

#### > DMYTRO SZYLAK'S HAMTRAMCK DISNEYLAND

There is concern over the long-term preservation of this beloved and frequently visited landmark that is currently installed in a residential backyard. As a recognizable symbol of Hamtramck's vibe, discussions need to take place in the near future to develop a preservation plan. The plan should cover maintenance, long-term stewardship, a potential fund and/or donation approach to offset costs and strategies to improve signage and access for the uninitiated visitor.





#### **POP UP PASSYUNK**

In early spring 2010, small businesses located on the emerging East Passyunk Avenue commercial corridor in South Philadelphia coordinated a pop-up shop in a vacant storefront for three days in the well-established shopping district of Center City Philadelphia. "Pop Up Passyunk" was an opportunity for these small businesses to reach out beyond their loyal hipster patrons and tap into a different consumer base, many of whom may not have been aware that this changing South Philadelphia neighborhood had so much to offer. In addition to offering discounts on retail items and services, Pop Up Passyunk also featured live music, door prizes, staged events, and local celeb meet-and-greets.



Pope Park is an asset but only if preserved and improved.

#### > POPE PARK

Pope Park is an important landmark for Hamtramck's Polish and Catholic residents and visitors. However, it is also tied up in fractured ownership issues. Many have cited the need for improvements to this historic landmark and a negotiated public preservation agreement with the owners is a necessary first step.

#### > HAMTRAMCK HISTORIC MUSEUM

The Hamtramck Historical Commission's main objective is to create a historical museum of approximately 7,000 sq. ft. to highlight the City's rich history. The City should help the museum find a suitable location and assist the Commission in securing resources to establish this new destination in Hamtramck. Potential partners include the Hamtramck School District, which could use the museum as a resource in expanding the role of local history in its curriculum. The museum could also be a big draw for school field trips from communities outside Detroit as well. Additional potential collaborations include partnerships with local industries, such as General Motors, who may be interested in opportunities to highlight the role of the GM Assembly Plant in the City's automotive history.



Auto history is integral to the City's rich heritage.

#### > AUTO INDUSTRY HISTORIC SHOWROOM

Hamtramck could capitalize on the region's interest in automotive history by creating a visitor destination in the City that showcases vehicles that have been produced in and around Hamtramck throughout the decades. The Dodge Brothers Club collects cars manufactured before 1930 and has indicated a desire to locate a showroom in Hamtramck. The City and local partners should assist the Club in finding potential locations in Hamtramck—the former Al Deeby Dodge dealership might be a good place to start looking.

## **4.6.7** Establish Local Hospitality Businesses



For those travelling to Hamtramck or Detroit, the lack of a bed and breakfast or small hotel in the city means lost revenue and tourism. Even a hostel would help to bring visitors to the city to patronize the local bars and restaurants.

## 4.7

# IMPROVE THE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR EXPERIENCE

Campau is the geographic heart of Hamtramck, as well as the scene that emerges in the mind's eye of many who have memories of Hamtramck, a central component of the City's image. It is the community's front yard; the place where residents and visitors gather for special events or to just hang out. For Hamtramck to succeed as a thriving, appealing community, its downtown must be the cornerstone from which other successes can be built. The same is true of Hamtramck's emerging commercial corridor along Conant, which is home to an increasing number of restaurants and stores operated by a diverse mix of Hamtramck's immigrants, most notably Bengalis. Aside from the transformative street and sidewalk improvements to Conant [3.1.3] and Campau [3.1.4], organizational, programmatic, and physical strategies are recommended to improve the user experiences of Campau and Conant.

In February 2010, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority [MSHDA] announced that Hamtramck is one of seven Cities of Promise communities chosen to take part in the Downtowns of Promise program, which will focus on creating an action-oriented strategy that will help in the efforts of revitalizing their traditional downtown or traditional commercial neighborhood districts. Building on this Master Plan, detailed plans and strategies should be developed with the business owners along both Campau and Conant to take advantage of this program and the State resources on offer.

44 AS TIGHT AS THE MARKET IS, WE NEED TO CHANGE OUR FOCUS TO BUSINESS RETENTION. IF YOU LOSE A BUSINESS, IT'S HARD TO REPLACE. WE NEED TO MAKE SURE WE KEEP WHAT WE HAVE. ?!

## **4.7.1** Leverage the Downtown Development Authority

A proactive Downtown Development Authority is a critical agent of strengthening Hamtramck's existing businesses on Campau and stabilizing this primary commercial corridor. Hamtramck's Downtown Development Authority [DDA] has been active since before 2004, however, it has faced many challenges and struggled to develop to its potential influence. Very few downtown districts are able to compete in today's market without a strong downtown promoter such as a DDA, Main Street® organization, or similar agency. To ensure success with implementation of this plan and the revitalization of the community at large, the City of Hamtramck and the business community of Hamtramck should ensure that the DDA is adequately funded and managed. Its relationship with the Hamtramck Economic and Community Development Department should be strengthened, and oversight by the Hamtramck EDC should be provided.

#### > RESOLVE BOUNDARY QUESTIONS

As an early action house cleaning task, the DDA must confirm the boundaries of the DDA district, which determines which properties are subject to the tax increment capture. Generating a map of the formally adopted list of legal descriptions of parcels within the DDA boundary reveals a number of holes and inconsistencies. Aside from this attempt to map the DDA boundary, the DDA has no accurate parcel map of the district itself. Addressing this problem partially depends on the City's acquisition of mapping software to enable improved parcel database

management and geospatial analysis [2.9.2]. The DDA should work closely with the Department of Community and Economic Development to generate an official map of the DDA boundary based on the officially recognized list of parcels within the boundary. Once an official map of the existing list of parcels in the DDA boundary is generated, the DDA and City officials should evaluate the list and map and determine whether or not any inconsistencies should be resolved by adding or removing parcels from the DDA district.

#### > IMPROVE WEB PRESENCE

The lack of information about Hamtramck's downtown on both the DDA and the City of Hamtramck websites is a missed opportunity and reflects poorly on the DDA and the City's image in general. In tandem with the recommendations for a City website overhaul [2.9.3] the Campau corridor should have a stronger web presence, both on the DDA website and the Hamtramck site. The DDA should engage local business owners in compiling a regularly updated online store directory complete with store hours and offer business-specific coupons or special promotions. The DDA's website should also be used to promote events on Campau, provide information about parking, bar and music venue happenings, and so on.

An improved DDA website would also make it easier for new businesses to learn about the DDA and its programs. Campau's high commercial tenant turnover rate makes keeping track of new businesses a challenge for the DDA. As participation in the DDA's initiatives is so critical to its success and the strengthening of the Campau corridor, the DDA should also develop marketing and educational materials to be distributed to new business owners upon receiving a business license from the City, ideally through a future business services One-Stop [4.3.1]. The materials would be meant to simply increase awareness of the DDA and its ini-

tiatives, highlight the benefits of becoming an active member of the DDA, as well as provide a best practices "guide to survival" to running a business in Hamtramck.

#### > FOLLOW THE MAIN STREET FOUR-POINT APPROACH

It is recommended that the DDA continue to utilize the Main Street Four-Point Approach®, paying particular attention to the Organization point of the Four-Point Approach. The DDA should project itself as the coordinator of revitalization in the district, but not the *implementer*. The *membership* of the DDA should take responsibility for implementation through its committees and businesses. The DDA and its staff should work to ensure that the committees are well formulated with clear objectives and work plans. The DDA staff should assist the committees by providing organizational assistance. such as meeting facilitation, communications, and information. The DDA leadership should develop strategies for attracting new businesses into the committee structure; its goal should be that every business in the district is affiliated with at least one committee. The DDA should also create opportunities to involve immigrant business owners, perhaps by adding a cultural committee, or by having the DDA meeting place rotate to include immigrant businesses.

During the course of this project, we have noted that the DDA has struggled to implement the Main Street Four-Point Approach®, with its four committee structure. We recommend the DDA continue with all four Main Street committees and charge them with strong work plans. In particular, the Promotions Committee should be charged with creating marketing plans and materials, and a best practices guide that businesses are given when they apply for a business license or that they can pick up or view online before they start their business.

Several communities in Michigan use the Main

Street approach, either as full members of Michigan Main Street, staffed through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, or as freestanding communities. We recommend that a training budget be developed for the DDA staff and committee volunteers to enable them to participate in the national and state Main Street training programs. Beyond grant programs and other benefits to an affiliation with MSHDA's Michigan Main Street program, Hamtramck would also benefit from visiting and networking with other communities using the Main Street model. Hamtramck's neighboring community, Ferndale, uses the Main Street Approach and represents an opportunity for networking and information sharing. We recommend that the Hamtramck DDA visit with the Ferndale DDA and use them as a guide to help develop similar structures and programs designed to meet Hamtramck's particular needs. As defined in this plan, the most important needs include providing support to small and emerging businesses, improving the built environment and streetscape, and improving the sense of community among the diverse businesses of its district.

## > CREATE A LONG-TERM STRATEGIC TAX INCREMENT FINANCING PLAN

Finally, it is of great importance that the DDA work with the City to determine a long-term financial plan for the Tax Increment Financing component of the DDA. There are two separate TIF districts within the DDA boundary: one encompassing the Hamtramck Town Center parcels and another that covers the remainder of the DDA boundary. The Hamtramck Town Center TIF was created to generate revenues to resolve the R-31 housing lawsuit against the City. With the lawsuit finally coming to resolution in the near future, the revenues generated by the TIF could provide implementation financing for other improvements along the Campau commercial corridor. A coordinated TIF plan evaluating the dynamics of the revenue streams and earmarking projected

revenues to fund DDA initiatives and public realm improvements should be created in partnership with the Department of Community and Economic Development, City agencies, City Council, and the Mayor. Proper management of the TIF districts as strategic finance tools requires a clear and sensible TIF plan to guide the DDA's financial decision making.

## **4.7.2** Form a Conant Street Corridor Improvement District



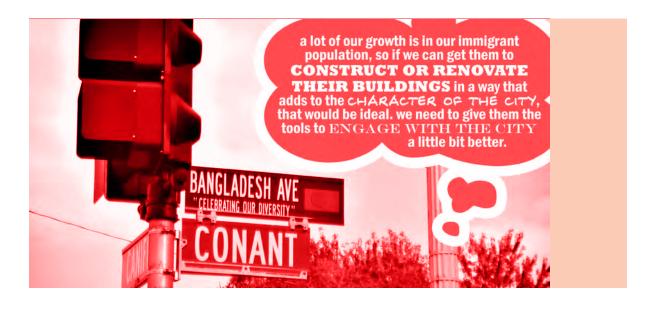




A Conant Street Corridor Improvement District encompassing Conant Street from Jacob Street to Carpenter Street should be established by the Hamtramck Community and Economic Development Department, in conjunction with the City of Detroit, Wayne County, and the business association that has already been formed by Conant Street businesses. The mission of the organization should include overseeing corridor improvements and marketing Conant Street as a destination: a unique

ethnically diverse shopping corridor. The development of a well-functioning Corridor Improvement District with a strong international identity will project a positive image of Hamtramck and the district, encouraging additional investment and pride of place in the business owners and residents.

Previous attempts to form a Conant Street business association were complicated by divisions among Hamtramck's ethnically diverse populations. In order to overcome the initial road bumps to form the organization, the Department of Community and Economic Development should partner with local service providers whose programs serve Hamtramck's foreign born residents to ensure various groups are represented equally in the organization and to establish productive relationships between all members of the group. Though it may prove to be a challenge to establish the Conant Street Corridor Improvement District, The City of Hamtramck has much to gain from the creation of such a district. It is an excellent opportunity to build relationships between the City and immigrant-owned businesses. The City, through its Community and



Economic Development Department, should utilize the association as a gateway to the immigrant community, attending their meetings, and regularly presenting important news and promotions to business owners and interested residents. The Corridor Improvement District can educate immigrant business owners and developers about American and Michigan business practices and standards to help them bridge the cultural divide. Integrating tools and resources useful to Hamtramck's foreign born business owners and non-native speakers of English into the proposed business services One-Stop center in City Hall [4.3.1] will help immigrant business owners develop contacts and encourage stronger business practices.

Once established, the Conant Street Corridor Improvement District will become a critical steward of the public realm within the service boundary, which will encourage what is currently a loose affiliation of businesses to set its own agenda and work together to improve the commercial corridor experience. Through cooperative methods, the businesses should pursue strategies to build on the corridor's unique qualities with the purpose of further defining the identity of this emerging corridor, potentially including the following:

- > Become an implementation partner in the Conant Street Reconstruction Project [3.1.3].
- > Work with the City and Hamtramck Police Department to support Conant's identity as a post-bar/post-stadium late-night food destination. Improved lighting and regular patrols would help Conant Street patrons feel safer after dark. A Conant Street late-night jitney service linking the corridor to bars in Hamtramck, local public transportation hubs [such as the future Woodland light rail corridor], Wayne State and Detroit's Midtown area, and other activity centers nearby would likely increase foot traffic at night and potentially reduce drunk driving.

> Work with the city to host events on Conant. In recent years, Hamtramck's International Bazaar has brought a monthly Saturday open market during summer months to the east side of Caniff, featuring a variety of vendors, live music, farm stands, and lively crowds. The DDA has organized sidewalk sales on Campau to coincide with the event. In order to focus more activity on and develop the international identity of Conant, the City and Conant Street Corridor Improvement District leadership should consider hosting the event on Conant, as well as expanding bazaar-type events and promoting them actively both in Hamtramck and in the Greater Detroit Area. If closing Conant to street traffic for such events is determined unfeasible, half-block stretches of cross streets on either side of Conant would achieve the same effect: attracting bazaar users to Conant and encouraging them to walk the length of the street, bringing more foot traffic to businesses along Conant. Additional types of events should be considered, such as a weekly "beanibazaar," a traditional Bengali early morning market tradition.

> The Conant Street Corridor Improvement District should hire a graphic design and marketing consul-

tant to create a corridor brand identity, as well as develop signage design guidelines to help business owners create a distinctive experience on Conant.

## **4.7.3** Encourage Businesses to Install Alternative Sign Designs

In Hamtramck, it's easy to drive right past galleries and other destinations because the signs are flat against the façade and not overly visible. Historic photos, however, show projecting signs, which are more visible and, if designed properly, can add to the character of the corridor. According to the city's zoning code, projecting or "blade" signs are permitted if they follow a few simple design rules. The DDA and local arts groups should work to develop a business sign program whereby the DDA will subsidize business signs if a local artist is used to design a visually catching sign.

BLADE SIGNS are compatible with our

downtown architecture. the

Some community members have the impression that blade signs are not permitted in the City's zoning, which is not the case. The zoning now has a number of sign design regulations that would help prevent the sign chaos that once existed in Hamtramck.



# LEA F





**31.** Temporary uses to activate vacant storefronts can enliven Hamtramck's commercial corridors.



## **4.7.4** Tap into Local Artists to Activate Vacant Storefronts







Hamtramck's commercial corridors are faced with the challenges of high turnover rates and instances of high asking rents. Both result in vacant retail space, sidewalks drained of life, "for lease" signs plastered across storefronts, and available space producing no revenue or benefit for the city or nearby businesses. The City, DDA, and local creative professionals should work with owners of buildings with empty storefronts to convert these vacant and underused storefronts and/or storefront windows to temporary galleries and installation spaces. The idea is to use vacant storefronts to install window displays promoting local events, advertising for other businesses in Hamtramck, and providing another venue to market and advocate for important services like recycling. This is an opportunity as well to include arts institutions in the greater Metro Detroit area to make visually stimulating installations promoting arts and cultural events.

This initiative would achieve a number of positive goals. For one, the local arts community would be reinvigorated by the expansion of visible and affordable space to display their art. Viable businesses on streets that are currently deadened by empty storefronts will benefit as artists breathe new life into the commercial frontage.

This initiative could be expanded beyond vacant buildings to include buildings that just don't have products to display in the window, such as non-profits—Acts 29 and PCS both have large and highly visible windows on Campau that could benefit from creative transformation. An improved storefront would help to draw further attention to these non-profits and make them a more visible part of the community.

## **4.7.5** Encourage Use of the Façade Improvement Program



Encourage owners of buildings on Campau with windowless or otherwise unattractive façades to take advantage of the façade improvement program to increase visual connections between commercial spaces and the public realm on commercial corridors. The City still has resources available for the program but there is a real need to increase the awareness about the program to encourage participation.

## **4.7.6** Improve Signage to Public Parking

Finding public parking lots in Hamtramck can be pretty challenging if you don't know where it is already—many Public Parking signs are too small and inconspicuous. The downtown experience would be greatly improved by replacing existing parking lot signs with larger, more easily spotted signs. In addition to placing signs on commercial corridors where drivers need to turn off to access lots, signs directing drivers to parking should be placed near major gateways to the City and to commercial corridors, especially Caniff and Nagel; Caniff and Campau; Caniff and Conant; and Holbrook and Campau.



Better signs are needed to direct customers to parking lots.

66 IN PERNDALE YOU PARK ONCE AND HAVE 20 OPTIONS TO EAT, DRINK AND BE

## **4.7.7** Consider Supplementary Public Parking Options

Hamtramck's commercial corridors are competing with other walkable retail corridors in the Greater Detroit Area that have the "park once and walk" advantage—visitors prefer to park in one centrally located parking lot that's within walking distance of their desired shopping destinations. Given the distribution destinations across Campau and Conant and the unique specificity of each user destination, the "park once" strategy may not be entirely feasible here—shoppers running errands may very well prefer to drive between destinations if they are too far apart. However, the City should set a goal of ensuring that there is a public parking lot within a 4 block radius of every commercial destination on Conant and Campau. This will likely require supplementary parking options accessible to Conant and the northern and southern ends of Campau.

#### 4.7.8 Make Parking Pay

Make parking pay for commercial corridor improvements. Increase on-street parking rates in the DDA and parking ticket fines City-wide and use the increased revenue to further fund the facade improvement program and signage improvement program. Cities of all sizes across the country are recognizing the benefits of raising parking rates. The result is more parking turnover which improves the overall parking efficiency – in other words, it will be easier for customers to find parking. Given that this will be a new concept in Hamtramck, undertaking a pilot program along Campau to test how the increased rates effect parking demand and retail traffic is recommended.

## 4.8

## DEVELOP AND ENFORCE ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC SAFETY AND OPTIMAL USE OF BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Along with an appealing and comfortable environment, visitors and regular users value convenience and orderliness in their business districts. Therefore, it is important that the City of Hamtramck address visible public realm and safety issues such as blocked streets, unlicensed peddlers, litter, infrastructure repair needs, and panhandlers. The Hamtramck DDA's Design Committee should develop specific systems for reporting enforcement and maintenance problems to the Hamtramck Police and Code Enforcement Department and establish a system of follow-though and accountability through the Department of Community and Economic Development and the Hamtramck EDC. Once developed and piloted in the Downtown District, the system should be extended to other commercial districts and areas.

## **4.8.1** Bring Bicycle Policing and Foot Patrols to Commercial Corridors





Recent efforts by the Hamtramck DDA have secured \$50,000 to fund the installation of security cameras [which are to be monitored by the Hamtramck Police Department] within the downtown district. The benefit of the cameras is that they may provide an opportunity to inconspicuously observe criminal activity and catching perpetrators

in the act. However, the cameras may not necessarily make patrons of the commercial corridor feel safer. Putting Hamtramck police on two wheels to patrol Hamtramck's commercial corridors [2.4.5] would both improve safety and the perception of safety for shoppers and visitors.

Unlicensed business activity is deleterious to local established businesses and detracts from the image of Hamtramck's commercial corridors and the City in general. The Hamtramck Police Department must make addressing this issue a part of its regular policing routine, recognizing that street peddling is an important issue in the City. Adding bicycle police and officers on foot patrol on Hamtramck's commercial corridors would likely help reduce this problem. Local business owners can do their part by reporting unlicensed peddling and any other undesirable activities to the Police Department.

## **4.8.3** Actively Discourage Panhandling





Some community members have voiced the need for a stronger panhandling ordinance. Section 130.009 of the City of Hamtramck Code of Ordinances prohibits solicitation, but the circumstances constituting "solicitation" as defined in the ordinance could be expanded to prohibit panhandling on public sidewalks, as other cities have done. City Council members should engage the community in a discussion about strengthening the ordinance,

LETHESE SAME PEOPLE WHO PON'T LIVE IN HAMTRAMCK HAVE BEEN PANHANDLING IN HAMTRAMCK FOR YEARS BECAUSE IT'S A SAFE PLACE AND BECAUSE IT WORKS FOR THEM. BUT PANHANDLING IN HAMTRAMCK IS A MAJOR PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUE. 17

and whether or not panhandling may be sufficiently reduced via a public awareness campaign to discourage well-intentioned giving on the streets.

## 4.8.2 Regulate Truck Delivery Hours





In many cases, the block structure on Campau prohibits truck trailer access in the rear of buildings. As a result, businesses on Campau are forced to load and unload products from Campau itself. Given that the busy mid section of this main commercial corridor has only one lane in each direction, large truck deliveries and/or pick ups during normal business hours can cause a major blockage of traffic, as well as cut off access to on-street parking in front of businesses. The City should work with local businesses to confine truck delivery and pick up hours to non-peak traffic hours on Campau and Conant to ensure smooth flow of traffic and easy access to available parking spaces.



Truck deliveries on Campau can cause congestion and hinder economic activity in downtown.

## 4.9

# RE/DEFINE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR ZONING & DESIGN GUIDELINES

Hamtramck's two main commercial corridors, Campau and Conant, offer users very different experiences and formal qualities. The CBD zoning category, applied to the DDA area on Campau; and the C2 zoning category, applied to the Conant commercial corridor, are in many ways contextually-sensitive and appropriate to guide new commercial development. However, some specific guidelines need to be defined; some need to be refined; and others should be redefined. Overall, Hamtramck's commercial zoning should maintain flexibility to accommodate a variety of uses, but be more specific on a number of formal issues to ensure high quality design of new commercial and mixed use buildings that will contribute to the image and experience of Hamtramck's commercial corridors. Many of the design elements emerging from the Master Plan process should be officially adopted by the City and codified in the zoning ordinance.

Going forward, the DDA, through their Design Committee, the Conant Street Business Association and the City's Community and Economic Development Department should codify context-sensitive design and development guidelines to be applied

LETTE BIGGEST SHORTCOMING WITH HAMTRAMCK'S ZONING IS THAT IT ISN'T SPECIFIC ENOUGH. THERE IS NO CLEAR VISION FOR THE POWNTOWN AREA, AND THE REST OF THE ZONING IS OUTPATED. ZONING NEEDS TO BE UPPATED AND MADE MORE PETAILED, LEARNING FROM PAST MISTAKES. 17

as overlays to the Hamtramck Zoning Ordinance. The overlay regulations should enforce the commercial/mixed use nature of the districts, and foster preservation of the urban context and pattern. Overlay regulations often work best if they are formbased, with plenty of clear graphics and easy to understand charts. Such overlays should address the following issues:

- > Building Rehabilitation and Historic Preservation
- > New Building Design
- > Signs and Awnings
- > Sidewalks
- > Trees and Vegetation
- > Streetscape Amenities and Furniture
- > Lighting
- > Pedestrians and Bicycles
- > Parking [On-Street and Off-Street]
- > First Floor and Upper Floor Uses
- > Process and Permitting
- > Commercial window displays

## **4.9.1** Allow Building Setback Flexibility in Certain Cases





Establishing a continuous street wall is one potential formal opportunity of mixed-use infill development on Campau north of Caniff and south of Holbrook, as well as all along Conant. However, the Department of Community and Economic Development, the DDA, and the ZBA are encouraged to think more openly about exceptions to the absolute rules regarding street walls currently embedded in the City's zoning ordinance.

Both the CBD and C2 zoning categories require that all new buildings "be constructed within one foot of the front lot line and side lot line on corner lots." However, the City should consider a variety of situations in which allowing buildings to be partially

set back from the lot line would result in a better commercial corridor experience. For one, community members pointed out the problem that some buildings in the City that have facades at the front lot line also have doors that open outward. Therefore, someone exiting the building may accidentally strike a person walking by in the sidewalk if they are not careful. Solutions to this issue would include either requiring ground floor entrance doors to open inward or allowing ground floor entrances to be set back from the street a few feet. The Structure and Site Requirements for CBD and C2 could require a percentage of the building to sit on the front lot line, but allowing the remaining percentage to set back from the lot line to accommodate the entry. This entry setback allowance would be consistent with many of the historic buildings on Campau, but is not currently permitted in Hamtramck's zoning.

The ZBA should also consider granting variances for development proposals that include setbacks where the additional sidewalk space is used to accommodate elements that will contribute to the public realm and the experience of the commercial corridor, such as public seating areas, bike parking facilities, merchandise displays during business hours, and landscaped areas. The advantage of allowing setback flexibility through the process of variance approval instead of explicitly allowing setbacks in the zoning code is that this allows casespecific consideration and design review by the ZBA to ensure that the extra sidewalk space adds value to the streetscape.

## **4.9.2** Limit Curb Cuts in the Commercial C2 Zone





The zoning ordinance should limit the number of curb cuts per commercial business in the C2 zone to improve walkability and public safety on the adja-

WITHE NEW STATE BUILDING'S SETBACK WOULD HAVE BEEN OKAY IF THEY HAD PONE SOMETHING POSITIVE WITH THE EXTRA SIDEWALK SPACE, BUT INSTEAD IT'S JUST WASTED SPACE.





**32.** Potential sidewalk improvements to the new Department of Human Services building on Campau

cent sidewalks. There are a number of businesses, especially gas stations, in the City that have an excessive number of curb cuts or excessively long curb cuts, creating a chaotic and dangerous traffic pattern prone to pedestrian and bike conflicts. It is recommended that the C2 zoning allow no more than two curb cuts per business [or per parking lot, if it is shared by multiple businesses] for bidirectional traffic driveways, each being no wider than 20 feet. Exceptions in curb cut length would be made to give flexibility for businesses who must allow truck traffic access to the premises, as the turning radius of a truck requires a wider driveway.



The Auto Zone turns a blind eye to Campau.

## **4.9.3** Enforce Primary Entrance Requirements





New development must include a primary entrance from the main commercial street. Ignoring this zoning requirement results in blank walls filling space along what should be an active, vibrant and retail oriented streetscape. As an example, the Auto Zone was permitted to be developed with the main entrance facing the parking lot. The result is a blank wall facing Campau and more suburbanstyle development disharmoniously injected into Hamtramck's walkable urban village feel.

## **4.9.4** Discourage Use of Metal Security Fencing



Both the CBD and C2 zoning specifically stipulate that: Outdoor security fencing shall not be permitted. Roll-up security fencing, if installed, shall be located within the building. No permanent or non-retractable security fencing shall be permitted within the building. The zoning should encourage greater use of laminated safety glass instead of gates which will help to maintain transparency at night while providing security.

## 4.10

# ATTRACT NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Aside from using a "Buy Local Hamtramck" marketing strategy [4.4.4] to counteract retail leakage, the City needs to attract more commercial services to fill the retail gaps to keep more dollars local. If Hamtramck residents have to make trips outside the City for one or two things they can't find locally, it's much more likely that they'll make more of their retail purchases elsewhere, even if they can find some of those items in Hamtramck—if you can get everything you need at Eastland, Somerset, Southland, or Twelve Oaks, why make the extra effort to buy in Hamtramck if that means an additional stop? In line with this objective, there are a number of specific strategies the City should pursue.

## **4.10.1** Develop a Specific Strategy for the Former Shoppers World Site

Throughout the Master Plan process, stakeholders expressed their concern that the Shoppers World site be redeveloped in a way that will support the community and contribute to the downtown's prosperity. Several interviewees believe redevelopment of the site can be catalytic for Hamtramck and the DDA. Three scenarios are presented below for consideration by the Economic Development Board: attracting a mid-sized grocery store, developing a combined-use emporium, and attracting an educational institution.

The prior interest from Aldi, an international grocery retail chain, indicates an un-served market in Hamtramck that should be met in the community. Some Hamtramck residents currently travel out of LATHE VIBRANT COMMUNITY MAKES FOR A POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL BONANZA!

the community for fresh foods and that there is interest in having more grocery options available in the city. We recommend that the EDC and the DDA, through its Economic Restructuring committee, evaluate the need for fresh food retailers in Hamtramck. Assembly and analysis of quantitative, qualitative and spatial information regarding grocery store locations and what is available should indicate the feasibility of a grocery store on this site. The DDA should also evaluate the level of interest of Glory Foods at Hamtramck Town Center in improving their offerings and appeal.

Combination uses, or retail "mash-ups," can be very catalytic in a community, as they have the potential to focus attention and a variety of activities on the site and its neighbors, drawing a mix of users from across the community. Shoppers and visitors like the convenience and buzz provided by businesses clustered under one roof. Successful combination



Shoppers World represents a gaping hole in downtown but also an opportunity to inject new activity if redeveloped.



**33.** Potential Shoppers World mixed use redevelopment perspective rendering

uses often include a gathering place with beverages and food: a coffee shop connected to a bookstore; a retail establishment with a café attached; a farmers' market with a pastry or deli corner; a Laundromat with an internet café providing instant entertainment while waiting for socks to dry; a wine bar with a gallery; or an antique mall with a diner, for example. The opportunity in this case is to subdivide the large floor plate of Shoppers World into smaller retail spaces that can serve multiple purposes and needs in the community, simultaneously creating greater opportunity for business stability through diversifying the supply to meet various demands and posing less of a risk to developers than relying on one type of product or service to generate commercial rent.

The potential benefits of attracting an educational institution to the City [4.11] would be even greater if such a use were located on Campau. Although the building currently on the site is meant for retail, an institutional use would not only work on this site, it would bring a new energy and additional foot traffic to the commercial corridor, contributing to the continued revitalization of Hamtramck's downtown. The Shoppers World site's prominent central location and ample parking are favorable assets. The opportunity is to forge a partnership with a local university to locate classrooms, offices, services and potentially student housing in the Shoppers World site. The university's presence would inject new energy onto Campau and establish a visible presence for students and faculty [many of which already live in Hamtramck]. Hamtramck is a natural research laboratory for a range of topics including arts, design, cultural studies, family services and education to name a few which would likely be attractive to many university programs.

## **4.10.2** Retrofit Hamtramck Town Center



Many residents commented on the inappropriate scale and character of Hamtramck Town Center. The 1999 urban design study recommended developing a multi story mixed use building along the Holbrook edge of the parking lot. The need for this type of improvement persists and it is recommended that the City, DDA and owners of the Town Center begin discussions on ways to incrementally adapt Hamtramck Town Center to a mixed-use, urban "town center." A new development at the corner of

Holbrook and Campau would anchor the site to the adjacent urban fabric. Broader improvements to the site would not only strengthen the marketability of the Town Center's retail spaces, they also have the potential to add value as a gateway to the core of Hamtramck's downtown area. Specifically, improvements to the parking lot should be considered to improve stormwater management and make a more appropriate setting for the large attendance community events that make use of the parking lot, such as Paczki Day and Labor Day events. Coupled with the proposed perimeter path and trail connection to Veteran's Park concept [6.3.3], these improvements will help to give Hamtramck's "Town Center" a true civic presence.







**34.** Town Center existing sidewalk view and conceptual rendering of potential improvements

Potential improvements to the Town Center site would create a true civic presence. Illustration shows new development at the corner of Holbrook and Campau, a plaza, rainwater planters and a new perimeter bicycle trail.



"the past year on average the City has seen 7-10 new businesses open each month...at the same time we are saddened to see the departure of some long-standing Hamtramck institutions."

- mayor karen majewsky hamtramck state of the city 2009

#### **4.10.3** Fill the Commercial Gaps



Through the public engagement processes of the Hamtramck Master Plan, several community members expressed interest in having specific businesses available locally. Some attributed Hamtramck's high retail turnover rate to the fact that the businesses that try and fail to locate here are commercial services that are not needed in the community. Attracting businesses to serve local demand would likely result higher success among new businesses. During the Master Plan process, several specific commercial services were identified by community members as gaps that should be filled locally. While the feasibility of each suggestion would need



At one time, Hamtramck was home to a bowling alley and several movie theaters. Today, residents have to travel outside the City to find venues for these types of entertainment. Photo: Hamtramck Heritage Collection.

to be carefully evaluated and a strategy for developing real estate or attracting a suitable developer or small business tenant would need to be worked out, the ideas below serve as a record of the Master Plan public input and as starting points for further consideration:

- > Pet supplies store
- > Hardware store
- > Art supplies store
- > Music instrument and gear store
- > Office supply store [with delivery service]
- > Membership gym
- > Bowling alley
- > Brew pub
- > Foreign language movie theatre

- > Additional coffee shop
- > Additional Laundromat
- > Bike sales, accessories, and repair shop [3.5.3]

Some of these commercial services gaps would be more likely filled by a national or regional chain retailer; others would "fit" better if they were locally-owned small businesses. The following points discuss some parameters in setting goals for supplementing Hamtramck's retail mix.

4.10.4 Establish New Small
Businesses that Strengthen
and Reinforce Hamtramck's
Unique Identity



Hamtramck has the advantage of having several local destinations and a walkable urban fabric, but it also competes with other destinations in the greater Detroit area that have the same advantages in a more "mainstream," inner ring suburban setting. Hamtramck needs to distinguish itself from these other competing destinations by playing off its one-of-a-kind destinations, its unique identity and celebrating its "alternativeness." Hamtramck's aspiration should not be to become the same as its competition; rather, it should embrace its distinct characteristics. By that token, encouraging the establishment of additional small, locally-owned businesses would reinforce one of Hamtramck's best competitive advantages: the inimitable experience it offers. Specialty stores and food-related businesses are ideal but so, too, are specialty services like architecture, web design and advertising. These "2<sup>nd</sup> order creatives" are naturally attracted to vibrant and diverse locales and provide indirect benefits in marketing and local services.

#### 4.10.5 Selectively Attract National Businesses to Supplement Local Business Districts



While it is important to retain the authentic character of Hamtramck's commercial districts by promoting local business, attracting a few national chain or formula businesses can have catalytic effects on the commercial climate and improve Hamtramck's real estate market position.

Through the process of developing the GIS database [2.9.2], the Community and Economic Development Department should maintain a database of existing businesses, as well as an ongoing list of commercial serves gaps in Hamtramck that, if filled, would complement the existing businesses without excessive competition. Prepare a list of criteria that indicate the parameters that Hamtramck needs to consider in evaluating whether a business is a good fit for the City. Some examples might include the size of the business, space needs, transportation access needs, workforce skills needs, products, byproducts, and so forth.

Prepare a list of national businesses that fit these criteria and develop strategies to research the businesses on this list, including talking with economic development professionals in locations where these businesses are succeeding [visit in person if possible] and web-based searches. Develop and implement a strategy and materials to promote Hamtramck to the top priority businesses.

44 CHAIN WOULD HAVE ENORMOUS EFFECT HERE BECAUSE NO CHAINS HAVE BEEN WILLING TO COME! 77

## 4.11

# ATTRACT A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION TO HAMTRAMCK

During the stakeholder interviews conducted as a part of the Master Plan process, it was reported that Hamtramck is home to as many as 3,000 college students, as well as a number of university faculty and staff. Both Wayne State University and the College for Creative Studies are within three miles of Hamtramck, and several technical schools and community colleges are also within commuting distance of Hamtramck. However, Hamtramck itself does not currently have a higher education institution within its city boundaries, a condition the City should work to change. The presence of an institution of higher learning would not only bring greater educational opportunities into the community, it would also have a positive impact on the City's image and local economy.

The EDC should develop and implement a plan to identify a higher education institution that will establish a satellite facility in Hamtramck. In addition to approaching local educational institutions, there may also be potential for a partnership with an institution that does not currently have a presence in Greater Detroit but would like to gain a foothold in the area. There are a multitude of programs, degrees, and certificates that colleges and universities offer, so it is important for Hamtramck to evaluate its unique assets and needs, and attract an institution [or institutions] that will offer educational resources tailored to Hamtramck's population. Given some of the interests and strengths discovered during the stakeholder interviews, two general areas are recommended for special consideration: cultural and language studies; and arts and design.

#### > CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE STUDIES

Because Hamtramck has a wealth of immigrants and first-generation residents, the EDC should seek partnerships with area cultural institutions and the Michigan Office of Cultural Economic Development to attract a University to develop a Hamtramck Center for Cultural Studies. Such a Center would be staffed by professional researchers, educators and visiting scholars interested in the immigrant experience. Other research and training disciplines that could be housed in such a facility could include global arts, fair trade and free trade studies, and immigration policy and experience studies.

One of Hamtramck's greatest competitive advantages is the wide range of language skills available in the community. Hamtramck is ripe as a center for language study, language skills development, and interpretation. The EDC, working with local charter schools and the Hamtramck School District, should also work to attract a higher-learning institution focused on language studies. A program that prepares area residents and immigrants with strong multi-lingual skills and interests for business and career opportunities in the language arts would be a valuable asset for Hamtramck. Dovetailing with small business development [4.3] resources, specifically for language and interpretation arts and skills, would also be a good fit with the entrepreneurial undertakings of many Hamtramck residents.

#### > ARTS AND DESIGN

From the stakeholder interviews and our research on Hamtramck it is apparent that Hamtramck has a growing creative class that has developed a unique arts culture in Hamtramck. The proximity of the College for Creative Studies [CCS] makes Hamtramck an ideal community for artists to live and work in, and Hamtramck should look for ways to supplement the resources and facilities provided at the CCS. Additional educational resources in arts and

design would enhance Hamtramck's appeal as an arts-focused community. The EDC should work with HATCH and other local artists and designers to attract a higher education institution to Hamtramck.

When the thought of incorporating this potential higher educational facility into a redevelopment scenario for the former Shoppers World site was presented at a public Master Plan presentation, meeting attendees expressed great support for the idea. An educational facility could become a powerful anchor for the Campau commercial corridor, bringing with it plenty of foot traffic without competing with existing local businesses; rather, the institutional use would diversify activities on Campau and support existing businesses in the process. A few general redevelopment scenarios are proposed for the former Shoppers World site [4.10.1] and if the an educational or institutional component is found to be unfeasible at this location, or if another redevelopment scheme succeeds at this site, other opportunity sites should certainly be considered for attracting an educational or institutional anchor to Hamtramck.

## 4.12

# CREATE AN ARTS AND CULTURAL COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF HAMTRAMCK

Hamtramck's creative community has brought the City a renewed energy and new economic and cultural development opportunities. With the College for Creative Studies and the Detroit Institute of Art in Hamtramck's "backyard," the potential for continued growth and increased vitality is there. Hamtramck business owners and developers have a range of opportunities to take advantage of this trend. To further support the development of Hamtramck's Arts and Cultural Scene, it is recommended that the Community and Economic Development Department work with the Hamtramck Art Collective [HATCH] and other local artists, designers, and creative professionals to establish an all-inclusive umbrella organization advocating for the development of the arts and cultural scene in Hamtramck and acting as a liaison between the City of Hamtramck and local artists, creative businesses, and arts organizations. The Arts and Cultural Council's leadership should be representative of the diversity of Hamtramck's creative professionals and should spearhead a number of initiatives, among which the following should be considered.

## **4.12.1** Develop the Local Arts and Cultural Scene

In some cities, the arts scene develops naturally through a confluence of inexpensive housing, diversity, character and chance. In other cases, the arts are more intentionally developed by city agencies offering incentives or other support to encourage growth. Hamtramck's art and cultural scene has a long history that is rooted in the City's ethnic diversity, music, bars and a growing number of people inspired by the City's unique identity. Hamtramck is encouraged to explore the following strategies to expand the arts and culture.

- > Provide Hamtramck's creative leaders with capacity training to write grants for local art initiatives
- > Help identify and secure outside sources of dollars to promote the work of local artists
- > Organize periodic multi-destination arts events like "First Fridays" and help to actively market them. One gallery opening may not generate enough excitement to pull in a large number of visitors from outside the City, but if local arts and cultural venues can coordinate to schedule simultaneous events on the same evening, the collective draw of the events would likely pull in more visitors to the City's arts and cultural events
- > Assist in setting up a website for the local arts scene that includes an events calendar and maps to key destinations
- > Develop an "arts trail" program with maps and brochures to market Hamtramck's artists to the state and region
- > Create a partnership between the Arts and Cultural Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the DDA and the Conant Street Business Association to enlist local artists to install holiday/event decorations



#### **BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO VACANT STOREFRONTS**

The Charlotte Street Foundation's Urban Culture Project in Kansas City combines artists' need for collaborative and exhibition space with down-town revitalization. The project secures vacant storefronts through temporary no- or low-cost leases and transforms them into arts venues with varied programming. Since its inception in 2003, ten storefront spaces have been transformed and the Urban Culture Project has become a national model. The project currently offers three storefront spaces and two studio facilities with free studios for a year for 13 artists.

http://www.charlottestreet.org

## **4.12.2** Provide Entrepreneurial and Development Support for Creative Professionals



The Arts and Cultural Council should develop entrepreneurial support programs to attract and grow creative businesses in Hamtramck. In conversations with local artists and creative professionals held as a part of the Master Plan process, the need for logistical and strategic advice on a running a small business, including how to handle taxes, legal advice, grant writing best practices, whether or not securing a business license is necessary, and, if so, how to acquire one, and so on, was voiced, The Arts and Cultural Council could close the service gap by organizing workshops and providing access to information about small business practices tailored to the needs of creative professionals. A short term solution may be to reach out to the College for Creative Studies about sharing resources with its entrepreneurial support program.

Providing creative professionals with networking opportunities is another way of providing entrepreneurial support—the more productive relationships local creative businesses can establish, the more likely it is that the arts and cultural scene will reach critical mass and actually establish itself as a "scene," rather than a loose collection of small businesses. In addition to providing needed support to existing artists and creative professionals, establishing such programming would likely be attractive to artists considering a move to Hamtramck.

44THERE IS A MISSING LINK BETWEEN THE MONEY, THE GRANTS, THE PROGRAMS AND THE PEOPLE THAT COULD ACTUALLY USE THEM. ??

## **4.12.3** Develop Intentional Relationships with Local and Regional Arts Organizations Outside the City

Hatch, a Hamtramck art collective, is a bold example of what artists in Hamtramck are doing to support each other and promote the arts in the City. As artists and creative professionals have made great progress in creating support networks among themselves within the City, the Arts and Cultural Council would play the critical role of representing all of these individuals and local networks in establishing connections with arts and cultural groups outside the City. Having an arts and cultural leadership in Hamtramck will give local artists and creative professionals access to arts and cultural development initiatives and programs at the State and Regional level, as well as create productive relationships with CCS and other arts and cultural institutions in Detroit to establish collaborative programming, share resources, and help organize and participate in larger scale, multi-venue arts and cultural events.

#### TAKING THE SHOW ON THE ROAD

In discussions with members of Hamtramck's creative community, many expressed the viewpoint that in order to develop a successful career as an artist or designer in Hamtramck, one has to be prepared for the constant game of pursuing recognition and opportunities to sell art in larger cities better known for their arts scenes, such as Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles. Taking the show on the road for artists who live and work in cities outside of the art world mainstream. the People's Biennial, organized by Independent Curators International, will tour the work of 36 artists on an exhibition circuit determined by the home bases of the selected artists: Portland, OR; Rapid City, SD; Winston-Salem, NC; Scottsdale, AZ; and Haverford, PA, from 2010 through 2012. This "grassroots" traveling exhibition exemplifies many current trends in creative consumption and production, including a "grassroots" move away from the mainstream. Hamtramck artists, designers, and creative organizations should keep tabs on opportunities along this vein to achieve greater exposure for Hamtramck's creative professionals and to get Hamtramck on the map of underground creative communities.



## 4.13

## **BRING CREATIVITY TO THE STREETS**

In a city with so many creative individuals looking for an opportunity to create and show their work, public art should have an expanded to presence with the purpose of visibly marking Hamtramck's scene but also forming bridges between different communities. This is more than murals. Public sculpture, plant art, video, sound and temporary exhibits should be explored as a means to spruce up gateways to the city, main streets and underutilized storefronts [4.7.4]. A formal public art program run by a 501[c][3] organization would help to link artists to opportunities and reinforce city initiatives or those of the DDA and other economic development organizations.

## **4.13.1** Explore A Variety of Potential Funding Sources





Identify potential funding sources that will not place a greater burden on the City's stressed general fund or compete with other basic-needs or infrastructure improvement programs. Opportunities include:

- > Use a parking ticket, traffic violation, and/or parking meter increase to fund public art projects
- > Pursue foundation grants from the NEA, the NEH, regional grants, and other grant opportunities
- > Earmark a portion of DDA tax increment funds for public art projects
- > Approach local financial institutions and other potential willing donors to fund a single public art

project that will feature a dedication plaque bearing the donor's name

## **4.13.2** Utilize Vacant Lots for Creative Programming





Detroit-area public art projects such as the long-established Heidelberg Project and the more recent Detroit Ice House are unique commentaries on abandonment and blight, which has in its own right become a sort of tourist spectacle in the Detroit area. This emerging tradition of both sanctioned and unsanctioned advocacy/activist public art projects in the Detroit area have begun to get a fair amount of media coverage—especially when "media" is taken in the much broader, more contemporary sense, including blogs, internet-based publications, and "Web 2.0" user-contributed content sites such as Flickr, YouTube, and online social networking sites. Looking beyond the visual blight they impose on the public realm and the other negative effects. Hamtramck's vacant lots present an opportunity to bring greater exposure to local artists, increase visitorship, increase awareness of Hamtramck's

arts and cultural scene, while also temporarily removing the negative stigma of vacant land through creative transformation. A variety of lemonades can be squeezed from these lemon lots: temporary public art and sculptural installations can upcycle abandoned objects; demonstration gardens featuring a number of sustainable features can increase awareness of green tactics; temporary alternative recreation and leisure programming can create attractions and spectacles; performances can be held against the backdrop of a transformed vacant lot; mobile art consumption spaces can jump from lot to lot; design competitions can be held to transform several lots in the City at once, resulting in a viewing trail with stops along the way to see how letting the imagination loose on vacant land can result in a variety of transformations; and so on. The City and the Arts and Cultural can do their part in facilitating creative interim uses on vacant lots by establishing the necessary logistical groundwork: making connections with willing owners of vacant lots, engaging artists capable of completing projects, and securing resources to cover installation costs and, perhaps more significantly, insurance costs.

#### THE PUTTING LOT

In the summer of 2009, a group of recent college grads pooled their resources and creative talents to transform a vacant lot in Bushwick, Brooklyn, into a temporary mini golf course. The individual holes were designed and built by nine design studios and individuals who competed in an open design competition to participate in the project. The course attracted thousands of visitors and earned the project's organizers an impressive amount of press coverage, including a feature in the New York Times.





## 4.14

## STRENGTHEN THE CREATIVE COMMUNITY

Though the earliest influx of artists and revitalization began 20 years ago, Hamtramck's artist population has yet to reach critical mass. Likewise, its identity as an artist community is little known outside the City. Market Hamtramck as *THE* place for artists to live in the greater Detroit area, as well as create more amenities to attract them.

## **4.14.1** Develop Local Creative Skills and Establish a Campus for Artistic Instruction





To help further establish Hamtramck as a home to more artists, the city and local arts organizations should establish a series of programs for art instruction. This would attract people in the Detroit metro area to Hamtramck to take art classes while providing the opportunity for additional income for local artists. This fits with HATCH's mission to renovate the police station and use it as an arts space complete with teaching workshops and classes. Additional classes should be explored in senior centers and local schools where, in concert with local youth programs, a subsidized summer arts programs could be developed for high school students.

In addition to attracting art and design school facilities, the EDC should work with HATCH and other arts groups to assess the need and feasibility of establishing an artist residency in Hamtramck. Welcoming new perspectives in the Hamtramck art scene is a great way to increase Hamtramck's exposure while contributing to the creative community.

441 WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE PLACES FOR ARTISTS TO HANG OUT AND STUFF FOR ARTISTS TO PO. ??

## **4.14.2** Create Shared Production Spaces

Aside from small business logistics, the Arts and Cultural Council could facilitate creative production in Hamtramck by working with the EDC, HATCH, and the other local arts entities to establish more shared creative production spaces in Hamtramck. Many creative pursuits require use of a variety of expensive equipment and access to production spaces with proper ventilation, sufficient space, and, sometimes, fire ratings. Printmaking, photography, woodworking, fabrication, and countless other production methods are difficult to pursue on a constrained budget and working out of the home. Oftentimes, artists self-organize and establish shared resources [with shared costs] among themselves: alternatively, such production spaces are established as an enterprise, offering individual artists access to production facilities on a fee schedule.

#### **RES ARTIS**

Res Artis is an international network of artist residencies that encourage collaboration and professional development through residential artist exchange programs. Ranging from government funded to grass-roots artist run initiatives, Res Artist has fostered creative development in over 40 countries through a variety of programs. Another artist residency network to look at as an opportunity is the Alliance of Artists Communities.



Establishing more creative incubator spaces with shared facilities should become a priority of the Arts and Cultural Council, not only to aid in the production process, but because they create venues for developing the sense of community among artists and creative professionals. Artists value collaboration because of the many opportunities it creates: networking and cross-fertilization of ideas, shared customers, and educational opportunities. The City of Hamtramck needs to ensure that ventures such as these have adequate support and that opportunities for independent artists are abundant and welcoming.

## 4.15

## DEVELOP NEW OUTLETS FOR ART IN HAMTRAMCK

Many Hamtramck artists may have convinced themselves that in order to sell their work, they have to look outside their own community, pursuing gallery representation, shows, and sales outlets in other places, typically the wealthier suburbs of Detroit and larger metropolitan areas outside of the Detroit area such as Chicago and New York. However, one local artist noted that while he is typically doubtful that "there's sufficient demand" for art in Hamtramck, he's "always surprised when people here buy art time and again. Experience has shown that people do buy art here." Fostering a successful creative culture in Hamtramck depends partially on the City's ability to recapture this leakage and encourage its artist population to sell art locally while also pursuing notoriety in major cities with more established art scenes. While Hamtramck's residents can't realistically be expected to absorb a great volume of Hamtramck's artistic production. Hamtramck already attracts potential consumers



44THE BARS HERE SUPPORT THE LOCAL MUSIC SCENE LIKE NO OTHER PLACE I'VE SEEN. ??



Fringe Salon in Philadelphia [above] is a part-time hair salon, full time art gallery that occasionally hosts art and music events. Hamtramck's bars, beauty salons, and everyday commercial establishments should likewise be considered opportunities for regular art showings that can help to kickstart a local market for local art.

who come to the City for other purposes, and, likewise, Hamtramck has the potential to attract other potential art buyers in the greater Detroit area. The missing factor in the equation is art consumption venues: galleries, design shops, and art boutiques. Hamtramck simply doesn't have enough art outlets to support the amount of creative production that happens in the City. Creating new opportunities for artists to sell their art in Hamtramck, both temporary and permanent, will help develop the creative community, as well as add to the character and economic vitality of the City.

## **4.15.1** Marry Art and Existing Commercial Establishments







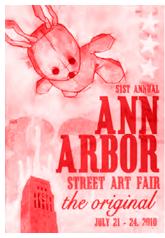


Pointing out the lack of art galleries and consumption spaces in Hamtramck, one local artist characterized the commercial landscape of Hamtramck as dominated by "the three B's": Beauty parlors, Bak-

eries, and Bars. However, the opportunity here is to create a mutually beneficial relationship between Hamtramck's existing commercial spaces and local professional artists, perhaps using the naturally symbiotic relationship between Hamtramck's bars and its music scene as a model. Hamtramck's Café 1923 already serves as a de facto gallery, with rotating installations of works by local artists. The Arts and Cultural Council should work with the DDA to create additional connections between small business owners and local artists to create more display opportunities embedded in commercial establishments. The art and commerce mashup would not only give artists more opportunities to show and sell their work, it could also bring benefits to business owners willing to donate some wall or floor space to local artists to sell their work. The draw of Hamtramck's existing retail and commercial destinations can be harnessed to bring greater exposure to the City's emerging artists, while bringing the art element into some of Hamtramck's more "everyday" commercial establishments would diversify the patronage and increase foot traffic in participating small businesses. Furthermore, the idea of an unsuspecting customer coming across locally produced drawings or prints in a Hamtramck bakery exemplifies some of the surprising "underground character" or quirkiness of local culture.

## **4.15.2** Assist Arts Community in Establishing Permanent Galleries and Event Spaces

Using local commerce as art consumption space has multiple benefits for artists and businesses alike, but at some point artists need a home base that symbolizes the identity of the place and provides a continual arts venue that visitors and artists can rely on being open year-round. The DDA, EDC and the Department of Community and Economic Development should work toward the goal of attracting a small gallery in Hamtramck as a venue for selling local works. A gallery would serve benefits including further promoting the local arts scene and diversifying activities on commercial streets.





#### **MICHIGAN ART FAIRS**

Michigan has numerous art fairs and street fairs where artists can sell their work, many of which are located in the metro Detroit area. The Green Street Fair in downtown Plymouth is in its third year and focuses on eco-friendly living. An estimated 90,000 people attended in 2009. The Funky Ferndale Art Fair and DIY Street Fair offer 3 days of art, music and food. The art fair features over 100 juried artists from across the country while the DIY Street Fair focuses on local artists, musicians, and creative entrepreneurs. Art Birmingham Fine Art Fair, presented by the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center, is almost 30 years old and features over 160 juried artists. The Wyandotte Street Art Fair is the second largest in Michigan and considered one of the best in the country. The 50-year old fair showcases 250 jury selected fine artists from across the country. Further afield, four award-winning art fairs are held concurrently in Ann Arbor's commercial districts, creating the largest outdoor art fair in the nation, the oldest of which has been held since 1960. The art fairs are juried and attract over 500,000 visitors from across the US.

11YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO LOOK BELOW THE SURFACE IN ORDER TO REALLY SEE THE SCENE IN HAMTRAMCK. ??

## **4.15.3** Selectively Unearth Underground Assets

In many ways, the "underground" character of Hamtramck's arts and cultural scene is one of its most compelling attributes. Many of its most interesting locations are either loosely-held secrets, or are simply not "destinations" at all, but rather buildings that have open doors to the art community or specific cultural communities, but are essentially below the radar for the general public. Zone 5 is located in a building on Joseph Campau that would probably be mistaken for a vacant building. Recycled Treasures is identified by minimal signage that would be easy to miss; no hours or information are posted on the door. Some visitors enjoy the sense of mystery and discovery—the experience of having to find something in order to enjoy it and having a role in the experience rather than just being a passive observer or consumer. But for other potential consumers, this can be alienating experience. The Arts and Cultural Council should consider ways of partnering with the creative community to selectively increase access to arts and cultural spaces as a City-Wide event. A "Hamtramck Open Studios" or

"Hamtramck Underground Arts" type event could, for instance, open the doors of art production spaces for public viewing, reveal unconventional art spaces, and use the event as a reason to allow access to other hidden or typically off-limits locations in the City and temporarily use them as installation and performance spaces. Vacant and underutilized buildings, such as the Missant Building, underutilized parts of American Axle, or any of the fraternal order chapters; buildings that may spark interest and curious speculation in passersby but may not necessarily get a lot of casual visitors off the street, such as the Ukrainian American Museum Library or the Zen Center; as well as artist studios and shared production spaces could become part of this temporary City-wide art installation. In this way, the creative community could simultaneously promote itself as an "underground" scene while temporarily allowing greater access to it and showcasing the City's hidden gems.

#### **HIDDEN CITY PHILADELPHIA**

There are many historical and architectural land-marks around Philadelphia that at one time were important to the city's neighborhoods, but their significance—and in some cases their existence—has been forgotten over the years, making them hidden to the people who walk, run, or drive by them every day. In summer 2009, many of these hidden gems were reopened to visitors who were also treated with installations and shows by performing and visual artists who created dance, music, sculpture, video, print, and mixed media pieces inspired by the history and architecture of the history and architecture of their selected sites. Hidden City Philadelphia 2012 is currently in the planning stages.



# GET INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BACK IN GEAR

Hamtramck has been a center of industry since its early beginnings. Starting with the Dodge Brothers Motor Car Company in the 1920s, Hamtramck workers have built a variety of automobiles and related products. Although Hamtramck is also home to Kowalski Sausage Company, the Metropolitan Baking Company, and various smaller industries, the automotive manufacturing industry has dominated Hamtramck's economy for several decades. Reliance on a single industry or sector should be recognized as a liability to the community's economic health. Hamtramck needs a clear, comprehensive strategy for diversifying and revitalizing its industrial sector and this is the optimal time to do just this. The City of Detroit is undertaking a Strategic Framework Plan that will engage thousands of people, collect data, and guide policy and investment. As a part of that Framework, a full study of the region's competitive strengths for industrial use, looking at both the specific industries that may be suitable for Detroit and the necessary land and infrastructure demands to encourage their growth, is underway. It is within Hamtramck's best interest to have an active voice in this process. There is much to learn about today's economy in the region and Hamtramck can benefit substantially from this work.

Bringing industrial recommendations into context, it's important to first review some larger trends and issues that impact Hamtramck's industrial potential:

-IMPORTANT-THINGthe city needs to do to shore up
our tax base.

getting our INDUSTRIAL BROWNFIELDS back on the tax rolls is the

Hamtramck has vacant and underutilized industrial assets that need to be repositioned for new industrial uses, an important objective to meet the goals of improving the tax base and creating employment opportunities for the local workforce.

- > Big auto suppliers are located in the nearby Highland Park industrial park and things have been picking up in the auto industry.
- > Higher tech, advanced manufacturing industries are not coming to Detroit. They are going to Oakland County and southern Wayne County, Plymouth, Brownstone Township.
- > Communities are reluctant to accept new industrial development in Detroit. Concerns over environmental issues and whether they will actually get access to jobs have often resulted in contentious situations. The difficulties experienced with the Marathon Oil development only hardened this resistance.
- > There is concern that the Wayne County Aerotropolis concept will absorb all of the market for new industrial use. Examples from other cities, however, demonstrate that there is often room in the market for a diversity of product, of which the Aerotropolis concept can only partially address.
- > The rail line on the west side of town is active and seen as a major benefit to industries who have access to it. This asset could be used as a magnet to attract new industrial development if there were available land adjacent to it. As Detroit's industrial strategy identifies market opportunities, Hamtramck will need to make some hard decisions about what areas should remain zoned for industrial use and what should change to allow alternative uses.

## **4.16.1** Retain Existing Industrial Producers



Hamtramck has much to lose from further declines in its industrial assets and capacities. To prevent such further losses we recommend that the Hamtramck Economic Development Board develop specific processes to understand, evaluate, retain, and nurture existing Hamtramck industries. Specific recommendations include:

- > Develop and maintain a confidential database of Hamtramck industrial businesses [maintained by the Community and Economic Development Department] with data on their properties, their workforce, their product and industry, their leadership, and notes on growth interests and challenges.
- > Schedule regular [annual] visits to Hamtramck for industrial employers to update the database and maintain relationships.
- > Include industry leaders in high-level planning for industrial development.
- > Recruit industry leaders as community ambassadors and ask them to host visitors to Hamtramck who are interested in industrial or commercial development.
- > Convene an annual Hamtramck Industry Leaders strategy retreat where they are asked what their challenges are and what they need assistance with. Also use this networking session to introduce industry leaders to new ventures in Hamtramck and the surrounding region, "brag" about Hamtramck's recent successes, tell them about new challenges and the strategies being employed to address such

challenges, invite them to participate in recruiting new industries to Hamtramck, and thank them for their contributions to Hamtramck and the region.

- > Cultivate innovation and increase local production and jobs by encouraging businesses with underutilized industrial facilities [including facilities with underutilized parts and equipment/machinery that isn't being used at all times] to sublease production space and/or equipment for the production of other goods and provision of other services. Invite local industrial design students to generate ideas for how to increase utilization of specific industrial facilities.
- > Proactively ensure that the City of Hamtramck promotes and maintains a dialog with its industrial partners and values their efforts to provide work in Hamtramck. The effort must say to industrial leaders that "Hamtramck appreciates their presence in the city, wants them to stay in Hamtramck, and will help them grow and prosper here."

## **4.16.2** Formulate an Industrial Development Strategy



With the recent struggles of the automobile manufacturing industry, communities like Hamtramck that have enjoyed prolonged prosperity and quality jobs in this industry must develop strategies to diversify and revitalize their industrial sectors. Industrial development, like all economic development, relies on three overarching methods to encourage growth: retain and grow existing businesses; attract existing businesses from other places; and grow new businesses out of local resources. Every community needs to set its unique goals and strategies for these three activities; however some insight into the success rates of each endeavor is helpful.

Retaining and growing existing businesses is very much like farming or husbandry—recognizing the value of what you have, taking care of what you have so that it lasts, and growing what you have through the addition of select resources at the proper time. According to the International Economic Development Council [IEDC], between "65 to 80 percent of new jobs are created by existing businesses in a community rather than by those that relocate to a community."<sup>8</sup>

Recruiting existing businesses from other places is what commonly comes to mind when considering what economic development boards and corporations do: they market the community to businesses looking to expand or move to a new location.

Growing new businesses out of existing talent and resources [sometimes referred to as "economic gardening"] is the work of supporting and encouraging start-ups and entrepreneurs. This work, often accomplished through incubator programs, is the most prone to failure [as are all new businesses], but also holds the most long-term promise for a community that invests itself in talented local business developers.

All of the above activities are important, and all require dedicated resources and time to accomplish well. The cost effectiveness of each activity depends upon a variety of factors that are unique to each community. Because a careful effort needs to be made to position Hamtramck as a 21<sup>st</sup> century industrial hub, we recommend that the Hamtramck Economic Development Board, with input from the Community and Economic Development Department and the community's industrial leaders, develop a strategy for improving and diversifying

<sup>8</sup> International Economic Development Council, Business Retention and Expansion, Washington, DC, 2006, pg. 7.

Hamtramck's industrial sector. In developing this strategy, the following information should be gathered and reviewed:

- > A comprehensive inventory of the community's industrially zoned parcels with regular coordination with the industrial strategy currently underway in the City of Detroit.
- > A review of the current workforce skills as developed by the Detroit industrial strategy.
- > Identification and assessment of accessible training opportunities in the city and region.
- > A policy review of incentive programs available to industrial developers in Hamtramck in light of the market potential identified for the region in the Detroit industrial strategy.
- > A synopsis of industrial businesses and change in Hamtramck over the last two decades. Include every industrial business [both currently present and those that have left or dissolved] and some indicators of business health and growth such as number of employees, business expansion or retraction, and the year they left or dissolved. This should be in matrix form with a column for an evaluation of why a business left the community, went out of business, has stayed in the community, or has grown. While this information may be difficult to gather, its value to understanding the dynamics of industrial development in Hamtramck will be tremendous.

Once this information is compiled, the Hamtramck Economic Development Board should convene a workshop with industrial agents in the city to accomplish the following goals:

> Identify and evaluate Hamtramck's assets and weaknesses, including zoning and development

regulations that may be deterring new ventures, transportation assets and challenges, workforce strengths and weaknesses, market conditions and growth, environmental concerns and strategies to address such concerns, and other factors that affect industrial development.

- > Benchmark Hamtramck's industrial business environment against those of other communities in Southeastern Michigan. Such a benchmark analysis is critical for Hamtramck to be able to identify its unique strengths. Without understanding and promoting its unique strengths, the community is unlikely to successfully sustain an economic development plan, and may find itself cycling through boiler-plate opportunities rather than approving made-to-order development proposals.
- > Develop goals and objectives for the community and the Hamtramck Economic Development Board and Department. These goals and objectives should be the foundation of the city's industrial development work and must be accepted and internalized by all the economic development agents.

With clear understanding of the forces shaping the community's industrial sector, and agreed upon goals, policies and programmatic strategies can be developed with assignments, milestones, timelines, and target accomplishments. Hamtramck's industrial strategy should be integral to the broader industrial approach in Detroit and Wayne County.

## **4.16.3** Review Zoning Requirements for Industrial Developments

Ensure that new industrial development is sensitive to neighboring streets, has active frontage on major streets, and includes landscape requirements. Currently, Section IX-7.03 of the city's zoning code states that "all premises used for business, commercial, or industrial purposes shall be screened from abutting residential zones." In addition to buffering requirements, the City should consider fundamental additions that encourage contextual building and site design to better respect the unique fabric of Hamtramck as well as specific stormwater guidelines that manage the first inch of rainwater. If possible, a design review panel should have the opportunity to review large industrial development proposals to help improve the character of what is built. These types of guidelines often raise concerns that new development will effectively be deincentivized. Other cities have found, however, that by also offering a clear schedule of project review, incentives in terms of fast-track permitting and, in some cases, additional zoning protection for industrial use, that new industrial development has actually increased.

RETAIN RESIDENTS BY STRENGTHENING NEIGHBOR-HOODS AND ENCOURAGING THE REHABILITATION OF AGING HOUSING STOCK. INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY HOUSING OPTIONS TO CONTINUE TO WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS.

Hamtramck faces unique pressures with regard to its housing stock. It is a community of choice, particularly fo immigrants, which explains both the City's recent gains in population but also its high rate of resident turnover In 2000, 53% of to the City's households had moved to Hamtramck since 1995. Those families are occupying housing built many years ago. Whereas the draw of Hamtramck's strengths including its distinct cultural groups, village-like character, relative safety, and far lowed vacancy rates than surrounding areas create a demand for housing, the housing stock itself, in many areas, is less of an attractor of residents. Hamtramck's aging housing stock presents a challenge to existing and potential new residents, not only because of the additional maintenance it requires, but also because there is a great lack of diversity in the housing stock, which may not serve the needs of modern family life.

The following recommendations seek to build value for residents by upgrading existing housing and supporting responsible property owners, attract new residents and nomeowners, and pressure negligent owners to improve their properties. New and rehabilitated housing should offer a variety of choices to accommodate a diverse population that spans across racial, economic and generational boundaries.

The objectives encompassed within the housing goals aim to promote new construction, rehabilitation, homeownership and rental housing options to accommodate the needs of all families; provide financial literacy and other information and training to local residents to improve the local housing stock; assist landlords and tenants to improve rental conditions; and target key underutilized sites for new housing development that will reinforce and leverage other planned investments in the community

# IMPROVE EXISTING HOUSING

Much of the existing housing stock is old and in need of regular maintenance and repair. Concern was expressed during the Master Planning process that the condition of housing in many parts of the City is poor, which limits Hamtramck's future potential. Improving existing housing requires both effective code enforcement and assistance to landlords and homeowners who want to maintain their properties but have financial or technical difficulties in doing so. This recommendation sets forth a number of strategies to stabilize neighborhoods by addressing the poorly maintained and blighted properties that negatively impact local real estate values and quality of life in Hamtramck's neighborhoods.

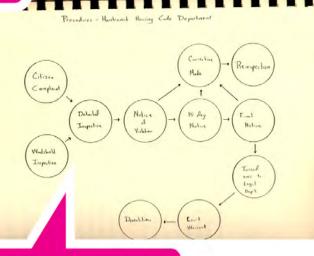
## **5.1.1** Improve Housing Code Enforcement





Improving Hamtramck's neighborhoods is, in part, a matter of effective code enforcement. During the planning process, residents spoke of absentee landlords whose lack of regular property maintenance habits has resulted in trash-filled yards and porches, as well as unaddressed aesthetic defects that often evolve into structural problems down the line. The triad of affordable housing [which attracts many first-time homebuyers and homeowners who don't have the time or money to improve their properties], the somewhat low 50% homeownership rate, and the influx of foreigners [many of whom are accustomed to different housing standards and who face language and cultural literacy challenges in understanding codes] makes for a resident poppeople are **NOT HELD** RESPONSIBLE for the condition of their properties.





ulation that is not naturally inclined to share the same values or standards as many of the residents who grew up in Hamtramck and remember it as a charming residential village. Add to the equation the fact that most of these residents are living in housing that was built more than seventy years ago. and the magnitude of the challenge faced by code enforcement officers is made more apparent.

The City too has recognized the challenge in code enforcement. There are limited resources and a small number of code enforcement officers to stay on top of the complaints and visible infractions occurring across the City. Up until 2006, code enforcement was limited and there was no rental code

inspector, which created a backlog of code issues to be addressed. Since that time, a rental inspector and a coordinator for all building inspections have been hired and the notifications of violations have increased fifty-fold. Lingering issues include poor compliance with the code, unresponsiveness to violation notification, lack of easy access to accurate property ownership information, language barrier issues between officers and owners, and securing resources to seal and maintain vacant properties.

To effectively improve local code enforcement, improved City operations and more effective partnerships with Block Clubs are necessary. Recommended improvements include:

- > Geographic Information Systems [GIS] technology upgrades to enable inspectors to quickly access accurate parcel ownership information [2.9.5].
- > Providing laptops and PDA's to inspectors to enable them access to City data in the field.
- > Post the Hamtramck housing code online and make it available in the major spoken languages of Hamtramck's diverse population. The City of Warren, MI did this to increase awareness and use of the code by all members of the community.
- > Train residents on code violations and encourage them to report unsafe conditions to the City. This could be accomplished through a Community Code Enforcement Program in partnership with the Department of Public Works, whereby community volunteers are trained in code enforcement and existing compliance tools so that they can work more closely with the department to identify problem areas and serve as a liaison between the community and the City. Ideally, Block Clubs would compile lists of potential code violations on a semi-annual basis and provide them to the City's code enforcement office.
- > For businesses, consider an ordinance that ties license renewal to compliance to permitted uses and building codes. City Council would need to work with the DDA and local businesses to determine the impacts and benefits of this kind of ordinance.

# **5.1.2** Provide Support for Existing Homeowners to Help Residents Improve Their Properties



Neighborhood stabilization in Hamtramck must be holistic and focus on the needs of existing homes. It is important to ensure that the residents and property owners know about available assistance programs and make use of them so that each neighborhood can improve holistically.

There is a clear need for homeownership support and expanded home improvement/maintenance workshops in Hamtramck. Hamtramck is not an entitlement community. Federal allocations of housing dollars flow through Wayne County and their Consolidated Plan, which is updated every five years with year to year updated Action Plans. Through this process, current dollars for home repair in Hamtramck are from Emergency Shelter Grants [ESG], Community Development Block Grant [CDBG] funding and HOME dollars all distributed by Wayne County. In addition, Wayne County has a Weatherization Program and an Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant program targeted toward helping qualified residents make home improvements and lower utility bills. There are also local non-profits that have taken an active role in contributing to the ongoing improvement of the City's existing housing stock. ACTS 29, for example, has a construction team that assists homeowners with repairs and minor improvements. With a current waiting list of 30 families, it's clear that these services are in high demand in Hamtramck, and expanded programs in this area would likely be utilized.

These programs are distributed on a case by case basis through individual applications. The City of Hamtramck should consider a few actions to maximize the use of available housing dollars.

MMY PRIENDS BOUGHT A HOUSE AND RENOVATED IT AND IT'S LIKE IT'S RIGHT OUT OF THE PAGES OF DWELL MAGAZINE ON THE INSIDE, BUT YOU'D NEVER KNOW IT FROM THE OUTSIDE. !!

- > Promote and distribute the City's Housing Resource Guide to local Neighborhood Block Clubs, Schools and non-profit organizations.
- > Organize more Housing Summits to educate residents about financial literacy education, credit repair and post purchase counseling which can help homeowners avoid the predatory re-finance lenders who often make up the bulk of the predatory loans.
- > Work with local non-profit organizations to conduct free home improvement and repair workshops to address the specific home maintenance issues faced by homeowners living in Hamtramck's neighborhoods, including roof repair, façade improvements, energy efficiency, and weatherization.
- > Partner with Wayne County to establish a "Healthy Blocks" Initiative where available dollars for home rehabilitation are targeted in designated areas to make a visible and measurable impact. The City should work with the County and neighborhood block clubs to identify 5-10 target blocks across the City using the following criteria as a guide: 1] Blocks surrounding key City assets like parks, schools or churches and; 2] Highly visible blocks and; 3] Blocks near areas of recent investment to enable housing dollars to leverage dollars spent on other improvements.

## **5.1.3** Demolish Dangerous and Abandoned Structures



Abandoned structures quickly become safe havens for squatters, rodents, and illegal or undesirable activities, which negatively impact every house and business nearby. To boost neighboring home values and enable infill development, the City should continue to demolish dangerous and abandoned structures across the City. The Cities of Promise Action Plan identified a goal of demolishing 20 unsafe structures, which is nearly complete. The City was recently awarded NSP funds to demolish another 40 hazardous structures. In addition, the City continues to work with Wayne County's Nuisance Abatement Program which expedites the process by which owners are notified of violations and offers them a limited timeline in which to bring a property up to code before it reverts to the county or city for resale or demolition. The City should work with Block Clubs to identify, track and prioritize demolitions across the City.

5.2

#### EXPAND HOUSING SERVICES FOR HOMEOWNERS, RENTERS, AND LANDLORDS

While many families in Hamtramck have very firmly established roots in the City, the recent trend [a trend that emerged through talking with the City and residents, given the lack of recent census data to formally quantify the trend] has been that many new families who move to Hamtramck tend to move on again after a few years. Hamtramck's high resident turnover rate has a number of deleterious effects on neighborhoods. First, the discontinuous sense of community makes it difficult for some residents to feel connected to their neighborhood, which makes it less likely that they will invest time and effort in helping to improve their neighborhoods. A resident who plans to leave in a year or so will consider any negative aspects of his neighborhood a temporary inconvenience that really isn't his problem, whereas someone who plans to stay becomes personally invested in the future of the neighborhood and sees that dealing with neighborhood issues are in his best interest. The lack of connection also means neighbors are less likely to look out for one another or lend one another a helping hand. Second, resident turnover makes it less likely that owners will make significant investments in their own properties, and less likely that renters will pressure landlords to keep their properties in good condition. If the City of Hamtramck can reduce resident transience and implement strategies to better retain residents for longer periods of time. this would create conditions for an improved housing stock and strengthen neighborhoods overall.

This recommendation sets forth a number of programs and policies to improve services for resi-

dents with the goals of increasing resident retention, increasing the number of homeowners in the community, improving the overall property conditions and providing assistance to those living in substandard housing.

# **5.2.1** Retain Existing Homeowners and Encourage Eligible Renters to Buy Homes in Hamtramck

Stronger resident retention is something that occurs naturally with improving schools, streets, public services, and the overall quality of life in Hamtramck. By that token, the City's implementation of the Master Plan over the next several vears should have the effect of demonstrating to Hamtramck residents that things are getting better-that they should continue to live here to be a part of Hamtramck's promising future. A critical part of this is that the City keep open channels of communication between residents and Block Clubs and City departments, regularly updating the community about any planned improvements and Master Plan implementation projects. If residents are made aware that the City is working to improve their neighborhood, they may be more likely to stick around to enjoy the benefits. On a smaller scale, convincing homeowners that they have a stake in ongoing neighborhood improvements is largely the responsibility of Block Club organizations and other neighborhood groups.

Increasing the homeownership rate is key to creating stronger connections between Hamtramck's residents and its neighborhoods. The City should set a target percent increase in the homeownership rate to be reached in the next ten years. The City should engage local financial institutions in helping eligible renters in the neighborhood become potential buyers for new affordable homeownership opportunities in Hamtramck. The City and local service providers can help first-time buyers build equity by providing homeownership coun-

seling and credit repair courses or developing and teaching a financial literacy curriculum, helping residents bridge the gap between renting and owning in Hamtramck.

# **5.2.2** Expand Homeowner and Homebuyer Education About Predatory Lending



While the City recently held a Home Foreclosure and Financing Seminar, more are needed to reach the populations most at risk. The City and local banks should work together to evaluate the existing resources available for housing counseling. Responsible bankers and brokers can be tapped to increase outreach to populations who are most vulnerable to predatory lending: elderly, minorities and single parent households. Alternatives for home repair should be offered as well as financial literacy education and credit repair. Post purchase counseling can help homeowners avoid the predatory re-finance lenders who make up the bulk of the predatory lending around the Country.

#### **5.2.3** Support Good Landlords



Income-generating property ownership constitutes one of the largest small businesses in Hamtramck and, yet, public policy has largely ignored the needs of landlords. While it is easy to vilify landlords or let investors 'sink or swim,' it is in Hamtramck's best interest to understand and support this segment as a part of its neighborhood stabilization strategy. Stronger, more intact neighborhoods maintained by responsible landlords provide a more fertile ground for homeownership to take root. Hamtramck will need to take a dual approach to landlords and investors. The first is to hold them accountable for

the condition and upkeep of their properties as well as take responsibility for the actions of their tenants; two, is provide them with the support needed to achieve that.

The City should convene landlords, investors, the Housing Commission among others in a Rental Housing Quality Summit. The objective is to review City policies that affect rental housing and landlord/investor relations and develop a proactive set of policies to improve the rental housing stock. This will require a multi-pronged approach that includes loans, technical assistance, code enforcement policy, tenant screening and education and tax sales policy. Specifically, the Rental Housing Quality Summit should discuss:

- > Using incentives to match good tenants with good landlords. The idea is to reward landlords who provide quality rental housing free of public nuisances by matching them with tenants who have completed a tenant training program. Such a matching program would require cooperation between City agencies, in particular Public Works and the police, as well as property managers, community development organizations, neighborhood associations, to market the program to potential landlords and tenants and recruit them to participate.
- > Establishing a Landlord Training Program with the goal of producing high quality, safe rental housing. Many cities employ such programs to train landlords in effective property management to keep illegal activity out of rental properties and eliminate code violations and public nuisances. Other benefits to the property owners and community are tenants who are more stable and satisfied with their housing, lower maintenance and repair costs, and improved property values. Landlord training programs are often part of a community policing program that involves law enforcement agencies, property owners, property managers, and residents.

# **5.2.4** Support the Creation of a Hamtramck Tenants' Association to Resolve Tenant-Landlord Disputes



Tenants make up the other half of the equation in a good landlord-tenant relationship and should also be educated in all aspects of rental housing to improve the quality of life for them and the community at large. Areas of interest include understanding lease agreements, tenant responsibilities and how to avoid evictions. It is necessary for them to understand their rights and have recourse to legal advice and mediation should they encounter conflicts with their landlord.

A Tenant's Association should be organized to resolve tenant-landlord disputes and, monitor and advocate for the proper care of rental properties held by absentee landlords. The association would have three main roles:

- > Create a central location for advertising safe, available units in multiple languages. The listings should include information on the property as well as whether the landlord has completed the Landlord Training Program noted above.
- > Hold a housing fair or workshop and invite organizations and advocates to provide information about rights and responsibilities, tenant-landlord law, and fair housing laws.
- > Partner with outside agencies to set up a regular housing clinic with advance sign-up whereby tenants can receive legal counseling or tenant-land-lord mediation.

# **5.2.5** Improve Housing Services for the Growing Immigrant and Foreign-Born Population





Increases in the immigrant and foreign-born population have been a significant source of population growth in Hamtramck. However, these populations, where English may not be their first language, are frequently marginalized and underserved in terms of services. To better support Hamtramck's growing immigrant population, materials on housing services and programs should be translated into appropriate languages, lending institutions should add bi-lingual staff, and informational sessions on various topics [home buying process, rental rights, opening up savings/checking accounts, building credit, etc.] should be conducted. The City should also work with local banks and community leaders to develop specific lending products that support immigrants who bypass traditional banking products due to a lack of trust.

In addition, in partnership with local service providers and non-profits, the City and should conduct all public meetings with translation services to break down the separation between these culturally different populations. Cities like Boston and Seattle, with very large immigrant and non-English speaking populations, are very experienced at conducting meetings in multiple languages.

5.3

# PROMOTE HAMTRAMCK'S NEIGHBORHOODS AND EXPAND LOCAL CAPACITY

Hamtramck's neighborhoods are rarely mentioned by name let alone as a source of marketing for the City. Many outsiders see Hamtramck as one singular place nestled within Detroit, but those most familiar with the City know that it changes significantly from one part of town to another in terms of housing stock, housing condition and the make-up of residents. While "Hamtramck" is a strong brand, its neighborhoods need an established identify to further assist in marketing the City to potential residents.

# **5.3.1** Increase Awareness of Block Club Organizations







During focus groups and public meetings, residents frequently expressed the need for greater collective action among neighbors to improve residential areas, but many were surprised to learn that there were already neighborhood-based resident groups organized in Hamtramck. Likely a result of the rapid overturn of residents, addressing the lack of awareness of neighborhood block organizations and their activities should become a priority for Block Clubs in Hamtramck. Increasing participation will strengthen capacity and create stronger community ties and healthier relationships between neighbors.

11 DON'T EVEN KNOW IF W

14... THINK I WENT TO A BLOCK CLUB MEETING ONCE... 17

**5.3.2** Develop a Comprehensive List of Neighborhood Websites and Offer Web-Design Assistance to Communities Without a Web Presence





There is currently no comprehensive list of neighborhood websites in Hamtramck in part because so few neighborhoods in Hamtramck have an online presence. The City and neighborhood Block Clubs should work together to create individual neighborhood pages and a centralized list of links accessible from the City's web page.

**5.3.3** Create a Collection of House and Neighborhood Tours that Market Different Eras of the City's Growth



Hamtramck is rich in history but there are many areas that could benefit from an increased awareness about the City's architectural and neighborhood history. Through foundation grants, the Hamtramck Historical Commission could expand local tours to include neighborhood-specific walks. These could include a walk through Hamtramck's most historic neighborhoods; a tour of private gardens; a house tour that enables people to see creative rehabilitations of Hamtramck's historic housing stock and tours of local institutions such as churches and mosques.

#### **5.3.4** Undertake Grass-Roots Comprehensive Plans for Neighborhoods to Inform Investment Decisions





To date, there has been limited planning in Hamtramck. This master plan represents a significant step forward in setting a clear agenda and framework for investments. But as a city-wide document, there are limits to how detailed this plan can get. To address the range of issues and truly empower residents to help the City improve neighborhoods, the City should encourage the development of community plans driven by grassroots involvement. Each Block Club would be responsible for organizing a plan for their neighborhood through a small City grant to pay for meeting materials, outreach and professional assistance if appropriate. The benefit for the City is that these neighborhood plans will set a prioritized agenda for improvements, some that will rely on the strategic provision of city services and others that will rely on the continued involvement of residents.

Each plan should be generated from a comprehensive analysis of the community and seek a public process to address the following:

- > Housing needs including potential locations for new development
- > Location, type and extent of commercial services
- > Infrastructure improvements
- > Open space strategies to improve existing parks and enhance the environment of the community
- > Transportation and mobility issues
- > Neighborhood marketing

MIP WE CAN MAKE HAMTRAMCK CLEAN AND SAFE, HOUSING WILL TRIPLE IN VALUE——THE CITY ISN'T TAKING CLEANLINESS SERIOUSLY ENOUGH. !!

- Social programs and services required to address local needs
- > Public realm issues including lighting, cleanliness, stormwater management, and tree cover

A key observation that should be made about actively promoting neighborhood planning is that not every neighborhood is ready to plan. Some communities lack capacity while others lack sufficient interest or coordination among residents to pull off a planning process. Communities with existing capacity can and should be the first to move forward with this effort. The City should assist one or two neighborhoods prepare neighborhood plans as a first step in this process. Other Block Clubs should be encouraged to follow suit, using the neighborhood planning processes completed in other parts of Hamtramck as models for their own efforts.

#### 5.4

#### ESTABLISH THE FOUNDATION FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Hamtramck is a growing City and population projections indicate it will continue to grow. But this growth has largely occurred within the City's existing housing stock. Some homes have been reused and rehabilitated; others have been converted from single-family to multi-family dwellings. Still others are simply housing too many people in the space

allotted. Hamtramck is under-housed relative to its population. To continue to attract individuals and families from many different backgrounds, Hamtramck will need both new housing but also a greater diversity in housing types to meet the needs of a diverse population. These recommendations are directed toward setting a course for new development in the City that is safe, urban, affordable and green.

#### **5.4.1** Resolve the R-31 Lawsuit



The nation's longest racial discrimination case— Hamtramck's R-31 lawsuit—is coming to a resolution. The restrictions placed on the City in the wake of the decision decades ago have effectively halted development in Hamtramck. Fortunately, at the beginning of 2010, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded the State of Michigan \$220 million in Neighborhood Stabilization Plan funds, \$13.9 million of which will be used by the City of Hamtramck. The funds will be used to acquire and rehabilitate 110 homes, develop 20 new houses, and deconstruct 40 abandoned and hazardous buildings. The development associated with these funds will close out the City's obligation with regard to the lawsuit. It is imperative that the City move quickly to meet its legal obligation and begin planning for new development.

# **5.4.2** Pursue Affordable Housing Development Resources

Once the R-31 case is settled, the City will need to work with its partners to pursue development resources. The tax-credit market depends on the credits distributed by the federal government to the states, which then further allocate the credits to particular projects. In Michigan they are awarded through the Michigan State Housing Development

Authority [MSHDA]. Getting local matching funds to attract MSHDA support would give Hamtramck a competitive edge in chasing these dollars. An expanded use of HOME dollars as well as the \$1,000,000 USEPA grant that will act as a Revolving Loan Fund to help fill financing gaps in redevelopment projects, should be evaluated. The DDA and the EDC should be brought into the process to explore opportunities to use these dollars as well Wayne County's New Market Tax Credit allocations for mixed-use development along Campau.

# **5.4.3** Encourage New Development through an Effective Permitting Process

Hamtramck's development process is not documented online and would require a visit or call to the City to understand the steps to get the necessary approvals. To make the permitting process a more user-friendly experience, Hamtramck should create an online tool that provides a project-specific development road map [2.9.3]. For example, Chicago's Permit Wizard allows permit applicants to enter an address and any relevant information about the proposed development, to which a comprehensive set of requirements is provided for obtaining all permits including all relevant forms. Simpler web tools can be used that enable appli-

cants to submit paperwork online, thereby saving both the applicant and city employees time in reviewing the project. As a first step, a flow chart that illustrates the steps necessary to obtain approvals for new development should be made available for download on the City main web page.

Hamtramck should also establish clear timelines for each step in the permit review process and be accountable for meeting those timelines. To determine a reasonable timetable for review, the existing review process will need to be tracked. Through this process, an average review time will be determined for each step in the process. As reference, Baltimore has committed to review and either approve or reject 100% of all permits within 30 days.

#### **5.4.4** Subsidize Artist Studios/ Housing in Exchange for Community Service



The arts are an important part of Hamtramck's identity. Artists are living throughout the City using portions of their homes as work space. The City should consider creating an urban homesteading program to facilitate the redevelopment of vacant and deteriorating properties for local artists. The

#### PROJECT ROW HOUSES

The mission of Project Row Houses in Houston is to create community through the celebration of art and African American history and culture. It is an arts organization focused on community as its canvas. Low-income and mixed housing, artist studios in exchange for community involvement, programming and support for youth and young mothers all combine to form their vision of community.

program would help offset construction and design costs in exchange for community service. Community services might include active involvement in community art projects recommended in this plan, teaching after school classes and workshops for neighborhood youth, and leading field trips to local art museums and galleries.

# **5.4.5** Create a New Residential Infill Zoning Category



Hamtramck's zoning code includes two categories for residential use: "R" for single-family development and "RM" which allows multi-family development. Currently, all of the City's housing stock is zoned "R," with the exception of the two Hamtramck Housing Commission developments. Both of these categories require development with minimum lot sizes and widths that are larger than the standard Hamtramck plot. Equally important, there are locations in the City where a medium density housing and mixed-use development should be encouraged and permitted as of right in the zoning code. These locations include sites along on the City's main corridors—Campau, Conant, Holbrook and Caniff Streets—as well as near the rail corridor where there is the potential for future transit-oriented development. This new residential category should enable zero lot line development, attached townhomes of 3-4 stories, smaller lot widths and rear parking where possible.

# **5.4.6** Allow a More Urban Mixed Use Typology



The "C2" zone states that "the area, height, and bulk requirements in the R district shall apply to all residential uses in the C2 district." Given the need



to encourage active street frontage and channel greater densities toward commercial streets, this requirement should be changed to match "RM" districts or the new infill category described above.

# **5.4.7** Consider Reducing Parking Requirements in Residential Zones





The structure and site requirements for residential development in the residential district specify that: "All new single- and two-family dwelling units shall have a two-car garage on the same lot." This requirement is very suburban in nature and threatens to encourage the construction of street-facing garages that deaden street life and limit the number of "eyes on the street." To better encourage infill development, the City should consider altering this requirement to say "All new single- and two-

#### **NEAR NORTH**

The Near North affordable housing project in Ann Arbor has received federal, state, and local funding for its environmentally sustainable elements. The project features sustainable site design, water-conserving fixtures, and energyefficient appliances and lighting. As a condition of the federal grant, the project must also use environmentally-friendly products and materials, provide a construction waste-management plan, and use mold prevention techniques. The Ann Arbor DDA's housing fund also committed \$400,000 to the project, with a \$50,000 bonus if the development is certified LEED Silver and another \$50,000 beyond that for achievement of Gold LEED certification. The money is awarded only upon issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

family dwelling units shall have a maximum of two off-street parking spaces per dwelling unit." This language change would allow developers the flexibility to meet their parking needs in a variety of ways while encouraging a walkable urbanism that currently typifies Hamtramck.

# **5.4.8** Encourage Green Retrofits and Sustainable Living





Decades ago, green or "low impact" development were terms rarely used in the context of design or planning. Today, development that is environmentally responsible is expected in a growing number of cities and the initial fears that green development could not be done affordably have subsided. Many cities, both small and large, now have legislation in place that either requires or promotes green construction.

#### **POWER HOUSE OF POSSIBILITY**

Gina Reichert and Mitch Cope's Power House Project set in motion the transformation of a neighborhood just north of Hamtramck. The couple renovated a typical single family home to be an off-the-grid energy-producing and energy efficient community art space. This initial project began at the start of the housing crisis and as more houses in the neighborhood became vacant, creative professionals saw an opportunity for progressive neighborhood revitalization that utilized sustainable design and creative problem solving. Eight other houses and three empty lots have since been purchased and are undergoing renovation. As the community grows, an unofficial neighborhood organization has developed to promote projects that include clean ups, public safety, community programs, gardening and urban design.

The combination of the cold climate, older building stock and building type [single-family detached] in Hamtramck makes energy efficiency extremely important for residents of all income levels. In addition, the City's aging infrastructure has made improving stormwater management essential to improving the quality of life for residents. Top integrate green design into the City's housing stock, the City should undertake a few key initiatives:

- > Organize regular workshops and tours that educate residents about green living and how to save money on their utility bills. If possible, the City should use CDBG funds to conduct energy audits for those that attend the workshops. The audits would help property owners determine how to improve their homes to save energy and money.
- > Create a Green Building Ordinance that includes the following components:
  - Requirements that all new public buildings be built to LEED Silver standards or higher
  - Conversion of all City non-emergency vehicles to hybrids
  - Requirements for green design on Cityfunded affordable housing developments
  - Green design promotion in the private market through a green "checklist" developed and maintained by the City for use by developers.
- > Create a LEED certification bonus program for new housing that provides a tax incentive or density bonus to developers that certify their development has met LEED standards.

#### 5.5

# PURSUE NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

In 2010, Hamtramck contains almost 82 acres of vacant land and an estimated 337 vacant buildings. This amounts to 13% of the total parcels in the City. While this vacancy rate is less than surrounding Detroit, the majority of blocks in the City contain at least one vacant parcel or building. This condition impacts nearby housing values and the quality of life for neighbors. But these lots are also opportunities for new development. Now that the R-31 case is coming to a close, the City has the opportunity to proactively guide development and make better use of its vacant land. The recommendations below are targeted toward encouraging new development to meet existing needs and potential future market demand.



Vacancy in Hamtramck is scattered across many lots, making consolidation for development difficult.

## **5.5.1** Encourage Infill Housing on Vacant Lots

Vacancy is scattered across the City, and it's not always easy to redevelop: there are small lots that would require parcel assembly in order to accommodate modern housing typologies; larger lots that are close to active or former industrial land that may or may not have contamination issues; lots in "limbo" because ownership information is lacking or inaccurate; and so on. The City should continue to take an active role in removing the barriers to infill development in Hamtramck. To support this initiative, the City should:

- > Consider organizing a design competition to explore ideas for redeveloping small infill sites in Hamtramck. This could be organized with local design schools.
- > Continue working with the Brownfield Authority to bring in resources to remediate contaminated properties and facilitate their redevelopment
- > Modernize management of parcel-based information by investing in property database management and GIS software [2.9.5]
- > Proactively acquire and package vacant land together to sell as one development opportunity.
- > Adapt zoning to allow infill development [5.4.5].
- > Release an RFP to attract qualified developers.

The City should encourage infill development in locations where vacancy is concentrated in highly visible locations and where redevelopment would stabilize blocks that have deteriorated. Initial opportunitie areas include: Dequindre south of Colonel Hamtramck Homes; Mitchell behind Joseph Campau north of Caniff; properties along south Joseph Campau; Yemans east of Conant and; Grayling and Denton Streets in south Hamtramck.



Hamtramck's only building over three stories [aside from the senior living towers] is currently in the permitting phase to reclaim the long-vacant upper floors for living spaces.

# **5.5.2** Provide Support for Conversion or Renovation of Upper Floors for Residential Use

The City and the DDA have long recognized the value of Hamtramck's downtown. A nagging issue has been the lack of active use upstairs in many buildings. To help address the issue, the DDA and the City are working to oversee a MSHDA grant that will provide \$35,000 per unit for the renovation of second story residential units in the downtown district. In addition to MSHDA's support, the Michigan Business Tax Credit, which covers 20% of construction cost and reimburses builders for the costs of demolition, sidewalks, and architectural design and engineering fees, is the single largest incentive offered for new construction. As a City of Promise, Hamtramck is eligible for this incentive, which is now, given the economy, not nearly as competitive as it once was. The DDA and City should continue to work find gap financing and incentives to ensure that the upper floors of the City's historic buildings are filled with residents and potential shoppers.

# **5.5.3** Strengthen Hamtramck's Student Housing Supply



Hamtramck has potential for creating a "student housing village" that capitalizes on nearby universities and builds upon Hamtramck's many amenities appealing to student populations, including restaurants, bars, a sense of safety and community, many music and entertainment destinations, and a walkable urbanism. Within a two mile radius there are approximately 35,000 students between Wayne State University, University of Michigan at Dearborn, Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, and Wayne County Community College among others. Sites along Campau in particular are opportunities for student and student/married housing on upper floors. The redevelopment of the former Shopper's World site would be an ideal opportunity to increase student housing options in Hamtramck. The opportunity would be to partner with a University to reuse the ground floor for a mix of retail and university office space with two or more floors of student housing above. Parking for the development would utilize a portion of the rear parking lot, leaving the remainder dedicated for the Polish Village Café and Polonia restaurants.

Should Shoppers World not work for student housing, the City should still proactively market Hamtramck to local universities as an ideal location for both students and faculty to live. A good first step in doing this may be to actually find out how many students and faculty members already live here—valuable information that could be used to attract more residents affiliated with universities nearby. Information on available housing and local amenities should be marketed in key locations on nearby campuses and on-line.

# **5.5.4** Consider the Potential for Transit-Oriented Development





Hamtramck is mostly built-out, but there are opportunities to increase density through infill development of vacant lots, rehabilitation of vacant buildings, rehabilitation and/or residential conversion of upper floors of multi-story buildings, and, in the longer term, more extensive redevelopment of areas near the potential commuter rail stop[s]. The Grand Trunk Railroad that cuts through southern Hamtramck has been identified as a potential commuter rail line. Should passenger rail plan become realized, a commuter stop would be located where it crosses at Joseph Campau just north of the GM plant. As it happens, there is a significant concentration of vacant and underutilized land in this area that could be redeveloped for Transit-Oriented Development [TOD]. The primary goal of TOD is to build mixed-use developments around rail stations that increase transit ridership, reduce car use and support local retail. The City should plan for this possibility by acquiring and land-banking property near the station for future development in support of a potential commuter rail station. As a part of this initiative, the City should explore the possibility of applying for a smart growth implementation assistance grant from the EPA.

## **5.5.5** Pursue Hope VI Redevelopment of Colonel Hamtramck Homes

The City and the Hamtramck Housing Commission should begin discussions now for the long-term redevelopment of Colonel Hamtramck Homes through a possible HOPE VI grant award. The fact that Colonel Hamtramck Homes is currently in good physical condition and that the Housing Commission is a HUD high performer makes the successful submission of a HOPE VI improbable over the next few years. However, the age of the buildings [and its systems] and the poor energy efficiency of the units, combined with the superblock site layout makes this development an excellent candidate a few years in the future. HOPE VI will provide significant dollars [up to \$22 million in 2009] to redevelop public housing provided that: the grant is used to leverage a significant amount of private and public capital and in-kind services; the development includes an off-site development component where site control must be demonstrated and: the development includes housing funded solely by Low Income Housing Tax Credits [LIHTC]. Successful cities often plan for a HOPE VI award submission years in advance by working to acquire key vacant sites and discussing the project with funders and politicians to garner support for the effort.

MAKE HAMTRAMCK'S OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AN ASSET TO THE CITY. MAXIMIZE THE OPPORTUNITIES OF EXISTING RESOURCES. INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY THE AMENITIES OFFERED IN PARKS AND PLAY SPACES TO BETTER SUIT THE NEEDS OF HAMTRAMCK'S COMMUNITIES.

The Recreation & Open Space chapter of this plan is intended to lay the foundation for the City to apply for State funding and other resources to improve parks and play spaces throughout Hamtramck. The strategies presented in the Master Plan build on the 2003 City of Hamtramck Parks and Recreation Master Plan that established a vision and objectives for local parks. Recognizing that much has changed in the City since that timeframe, this process was careful to generate public input specific to Hamtramck's recreation and open space resources. An open space survey was created on-line and received 161 responses. The results from these surveys, supplemented by the feedback generated from over 50 interviews, guided the development of the strategies and helped to prioritize specific improvements such that resources are targeted to address the primary concerns of the community. As a result, this chapter recommends new policies and administrative functions to improve park spaces, identifies new programming opportunities to meet resident needs, establishes specific site improvement plans for community assets such as Veteran's Park, and identifies potential new park space to be created in the City. To fulfill the requirements of a Recreation and Open Space Plan approved by MSHDA and other agencies, the City will need to package a separate open space plan combining the recommendations in this chapter with information on the Parks Commission budget, staff, operations and facilities.

#### 6.1

# CONSOLIDATE PARK STEWARDSHIP





At present, Hamtramck's parks and open spaces are maintained by two civic entities: the Hamtramck School District's Recreation Department maintains and programs all of the City's public open spaces and recreational facilities except for the portion of Veteran's Park between Campau and the Park's central parking lot, which is within the purview of the City of Hamtramck. The City's budget constraints and lack of parks and recreation staff at the City level have resulted in progressive degradation of this section of the park, which represents the greatest challenge in improving Hamtramck's existing parks and recreational facilities. Though the Recreation Department sometimes takes care of minor landscape maintenance in the City's section of Veterans Park, the furnishings and infrastructure are in very poor condition and are in dire need of repair. Implementing necessary improvements to this section of Veterans Park requires oversight and funding that City Hall is not at present capable of providing. Furthermore, discrepancies between park ownership and stewardship have made Hamtramck ineligible to apply for some grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Wayne County. The City cannot apply for funding because it is not the recreational organization in Hamtramck; the School District's Recreation Department is ineligible for funding because it does not own the land.

Given the fiscal challenges the City continues to face and the greater capacity and funding of the School District's Recreation Department, it is within the community's best interest to consolidate

park stewardship and ownership in Hamtramck by creating a partnership between the City and the Recreation Department to maintain and improve Hamtramck's parks and recreational facilities. This fiscally efficient partnership would be responsible for all recreation and open spaces owned and/or maintained by the City or School District's Recreation Department, and should be motivated to not only maintain current level of services, but also continually work to improve open space level of service in Hamtramck. The agency should be coordinated with both the School Board and School District administration, as well as City agencies. A joint Recreation Department must represent the best interests of the entire community of Hamtramck and residents of all ages.



People's Community Services engages local youth in learning about gardening and community stewardship.

#### 6.2

#### ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Many of Hamtramck's residents have a distinct pride of place and commitment to improving their community that could be further focused on maintaining and improving the City's parks and play spaces. An astounding 69% of residents who took the Parks and Open Space survey said they would be willing to volunteer for a community clean up and help to clean and beautify Hamtramck's parks. The City should encourage community stewardship of Hamtramck's parks and open spaces as a strategy to implement short-term short-term, "D.I.Y." improvements and improve the general upkeep of parks and play spaces.

# **6.2.1** Establish Friends-Of Park Groups









The regular users and neighbors of Hamtramck's parks should take on a role of stewardship and advocacy of the parks and play spaces they care about. Block Clubs, community-oriented non-profits, schools, and residents adjacent to local parks should form "Friends" groups that would meet regularly to organize clean-up days; community policing of parks; events such as movie screenings and park potluck picnics; and fundraising events. "Friends" groups should develop capacity to raise funds and apply for grants to make improvements to their park in partnership with the City, including lighting upgrades, improved seating, trash receptacles, sponsored gardens, tree plantings, and play equipment. In addition to improving park upkeep and making park improvements, the groups would

46 VET'S PARK IS STREWN WITH LITTER AND THE TRASH CANS OVER-PLOWING. LET'S MAINTAIN THE PARKS WE HAVE. ??

have the effect of bringing greater visibility to the parks and creating stronger connections between communities and Hamtramck's parks, making them greater assets to neighborhoods and to the City as a whole.

# **6.2.2** Institute an Inmate Work Crew Park Clean Up Program





Prison work crews from the Wayne County Jail are regularly deployed to Hamtramck's streets for trash pick-up. The City should approach the program administrators about expanding this effort to include regular park clean-up days.

# **6.3.1** Provide Wireless Broadband and Charging Ports for Public Spaces

The City of Hamtramck is currently pursuing funding to establish wireless internet access for two of its parks. The addition of this amenity has the potential to increase park patronage and diversify park users, improving park utilization overall.

## **6.3.2** Create a More Welcoming Pope Park

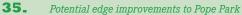
Although Pope Park is owned and maintained by private parties, this semi-public space on Campau is nevertheless an important asset to the City and a source of great community pride to which the City should offer assistance and resources for improvements. This small plaza has the potential to become even more valuable as an urban space and enjoyable as an iconic visitor destination if a few small improvements were to be considered. Simple

and inexpensive enhancements to Pope Park could be very impactful in strengthening its formal relationship to the iconic tallest building in Hamtramck, located just across Belmont, and making the park more inviting and integral to the Campau streetscape. The perimeter fence, while in good condition, creates an unwelcoming barrier between the park and the public realm. Replacing the fence with a second line of street trees to complement those at the street's edge on Belmont could create a visually pleasing allée and soften the harshness of the plaza's surfaces, while also serving a similar purpose in distinguishing the plaza area from the sidewalk itself. An additional curb ramp addressing the Campau entrance would both establish a more direct means of access to the park and improve walkability on the commercial corridor. At present, the single curb ramp serving this corner is located on Belmont, which is not an ideal configuration.

#### 6.3

# IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF HAMTRAMCK'S PARKS AND PLAY SPACES

Public input placed a clear emphasis on improving Hamtramck's existing parks. Many parks are underutilized; some residents feel that their poor condition and lack of programming makes some parks more a liability than an asset to the community. Improving the existing parks as a resource to all communities in Hamtramck is integral to strengthening the City's neighborhoods, attracting new families to live in Hamtramck, and improving the overall image of the City. The following short and long term recommendations are tailored to meet this goal.







#### **6.3.3** Revitalize Veteran's Park







Veteran's Park represents the City's biggest opportunity as well as its greatest challenge among the City's open space and recreational facilities. This park has tremendous potential not only as a great amenity for residents, but also as a visitorship draw, which could increase local spending. Given the distinct emphasis residents placed on the importance of improving Veteran's Park, it is the focus of the Master Plan's recreation and open space components. A number of short and long term strategies should be considered in its revitalization.

#### > GET THE BALL ROLLING WITH SHORT-TERM IMPROVE-MENTS

- > Demolish vacant residential buildings near Veteran's Park
- > Demolish the dilapidated and unsalvageable buildings in the park, including the former public bathroom building
- > Properly seal Roesink Stadium until resources can be secured and plans can be made for its restoration. Neighbors complain of vandalism and illicit activities occurring under the bleachers, where a chain link fence has been damaged to allow entry under the stadium.
- > Make improvements to the park's frontage on Campau to improve perception of the park create a more welcoming entrance, including tree plantings, benches, and pedestrian-scale lighting at sidewalk edge.
- > The Veteran's Park playscape area at the termination of Berres Street recently fell victim to acts of arson. Local community and social service provider People's Community Services has spearheaded an





**36.** Existing Veteran's Park plan view and issues

VETERAN'S PARK

**EXISTING PARK ISSUES** 



**37.** Potential improvements to the Campau entrance to Veteran's Park

effort to secure funding and formalize plans to install universal access playground equipment in the Park, creating recreational opportunities for handicapped children. The conceptual site plan locates the universal access playground behind the Colonel Hamtramck Statue, where it is felt it would have a more desirable visual connection with Campau than the current playscape location. Programming this area would also bring activity to the entrance to the park, which would have the effect of improving perception of the park.

- > Form a "Friends of Veteran's Park" community stewardship group to make short-term improvements and help maintain and program the park.
- > Make better use of underutilized pockets of the park by allowing neighborhood groups to create community garden areas.

> Nature has reclaimed the synthetic field at Keyworth Stadium—real blades of grass are growing up through the surface. Funding should be pursued to replace the field in the short term.

#### > ADD STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FEATURES

> Improve stormwater management in the park to prevent the formation of large puddles that limit the usability of the park's recreation fields.

# > IMPROVE CIRCULATION AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY

- > Improve path connections through the park from Conant to Campau
- > Add an additional bike/multi-use path along the rail from Clay to Conant, accompanied by a sound wall barrier to buffer the recreation path and the park from the rail activity

- > Relocate parking to new perimeter road. This creates more usable park space while retaining plenty of parking spaces to serve the park's visitors.
- > Create a green alley path connection to the proposed Hamtramck Town Center perimeter multiuse path [6.4.2]
- > Make formal path connections to future Gallagher bike route
- > Consider removing low cinder block structures on either side of the Roesink Stadium seating to cre-





# VETERAN'S PARK

PROPOSED CIRCULATION

- Auto

- Bike

Pedestrian

**38.** Proposed Veteran's Park redesign circulation diagram



# VETERAN'S PARK

**PROPOSED SITE PLAN** 

**39.** Proposed Veteran's Park redesign program plan

ate views from the adjacent neighborhood into the park's interior for improved natural surveillance of the park, as well as establish additional park connections from the adjacent neighborhood into the park's path network

> Realign entrance paths from Campau to create a more inviting approach into the park, create a more flexible "promenade" to the Colonel's tomb, and respect pedestrian desire lines.

#### > CREATE ACTIVE FRONTAGE ON THE PARK

> With 88% of the park bounded by inactive frontage, increasing natural surveillance of the interior areas of the park will be critical to the park's revitalization. With more strategically placed "eyes on the park," users will likely feel more comfortable recreating in more areas of the park, making fuller use of Veteran's Park's expansive scale. This City should consider developing housing overlooking Veteran's Park to create an active frontage and make better use of underutilized spaces on the south west edge of the park. With new housing facing this part of the park, an area that now feels uncomfortably hidden away from active areas would be more welcoming. This will require political and public support, as Section 154.001 of the Hamtramck Code states that new buildings may not be constructed on park land unless the project "is approved by a three-fifths vote of the electors voting thereon at any general or special election."

#### > MAKE THE PARK FEEL MORE SAFE

- > Improve night visibility throughout the park with high-efficiency lighting
- > Install emergency phones

#### **CONSIDER NEW PROGRAMMATIC POSSIBILITIES**

> The debate of whether or not to restore Roesink Stadium has persisted for a number of years in City Hall and among Hamtramckans. During the course of the Master Plan, research and dialogue regarding its past has revealed Roesink's great historical significance as one of the few stadiums still standing that once hosted Negro League baseball games. The information has shifted the conversation significantly toward discussions of restoring Roesink Stadium. Structural engineers evaluated the stadium seating three years ago and determined that the stadium's steel structure appears to be okay but that the wood needs to be replaced. The City should hire a consultant to prepare a cost estimate for the complete restoration of the Stadium and begin to identify and pursue potential sources of funding for the project.

> Restoring Roesink Stadium will bring great programmatic opportunities to the sports field it faces. While the Stadium was historically used as a baseball field, the City should consider the benefits of creating a multi-function recreation space. For instance, several residents were vocal about the lack of a running and walking track in Hamtramck. In fact 88% of surveyees named walking as a recreational activity they regularly enjoy, while 58% identified running and jogging. The perimeter of the Roesink Stadium field, expanded to include part of the area currently occupied by the park's central parking lot, would be long enough to create a quarter-mile running and walking track to meet this need. Provision of a track would likely bring users to this area to the park at various times throughout the day and week, as opposed to using the space exclusively as a baseball field, which only brings activity to the field during games. The field itself

LITHERE ONCE WAS A QUARTER MILE RUNNING TRACK WHERE THE POOTBALL STAPIUM IS NOW. IT IS SORELY MISSED. IT PROVIDED A SAFER OPTION FOR RUNNERS, JOGGERS AND WALKERS. IT WOULD ENCOURAGE MORE PEOPLE TO GET OUT AND BE ACTIVE AND HEALTHIER. !!



A player touches the base at the ball diamond at Veteran's Memorial Park. In the background is Pilsudski School, which for a time served as the city library and city hall. This photo dates from 1961. Photo and caption: Hamtramck Heritage Collection.

should also be considered as an opportunity to accommodate multiple activities. The expanded field area, as shown in the conceptual plan view [Figure 39], is large enough to host cricket games, which several community members and surveyees identified as an unmet recreational need in the City. One of the most popular team sports in the world that is rapidly increasing in popularity in the United States [prominently in Atlanta and New York], cricket is also the "baseball" [in terms of popularity and identity as a national pastime] of the native countries of many of Hamtramck's foreign-born and first- and second-generation families. With Hamtramck's shifting ethnic heritage, the City and Recreation Commission should make a concerted effort to provide recreational programming that reflects the interests of the community. The Greater Detroit Area is home to multiple cricket leagues the City should reach out to in order to learn more about the sport and its facility needs. If Hamtramck were to tap into this emerging tradition, it would not only be creating valuable connections with other com45 SOME KIPS CAN'T GO ALL THE WAY POWNTOWN JUST TO SKATE. THEY COULD GO RIGHT HERE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOP! ??



People's Community Services recently organized an outing to Veteran's Park with local youth, who looked at Veteran's Park with a critical eye and came up with ideas for park revitalization.

munities, there may also be economic benefits as well—cricket league matches would likely attract many spectators to the City, increasing visitorship and local spending. As a multipurpose field, the Roesink Stadium field could simultaneously act as a playing field for baseball, softball, and cricket.

> The former outdoor ice rink's chiller units are nonfunctional beyond the point of repair and its concrete base has cracked in several places. Some debate exists as to whether to pursue funding to restore the ice rink and whether the City can find room in the annual budget to pay for its operation costs. Given the City's recurrent fiscal challenges, an interim and/or alternative strategy is recommended. The conceptual park revitalization plan proposes reducing the rink's footprint and pouring a new concrete surface so that it may be used as a regulation-size roller hockey rink, resulting in a much more economical diversification of recreation options reflective of contemporary sports activities.

MTURN A SPACE AT ONE OF THE PARKS INTO A POG PARK! THERE ARE A LOT OF POG PEOPLE IN THE CITY AND THEY PONT HAVE ANYWHERE TO TAKE THEM TO LET THEM RUN AROUND. WE TAKE OUR POGS TO WARREN AND ST. CLAIR SHORES TO PO THAT AND RUN INTO ALOT OF PEOPLE FROM HAMTRAMCK THERE. IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE SOMETHING CLOSER. ??

> Several community members indicated there is a need for one or more dog parks in Hamtramck. The conceptual park revitalization plan sets aside an area near the Campau entrance for a fenced dog run. Passing an ordinance requiring city-wide dog licensing for a small fee could be one way of generating revenues to fund a dog park.

# **6.3.4** Improve School Recreation Spaces

A comprehensive evaluation of school recreation spaces should be undertaken by the School District. Enhancements should focus on softening these paved hardscapes with rain gardens and tree plantings, simultaneously improving stormwater management while bringing some green into the picture; replacing dilapidated recreation equipment; and improving lighting. In many cases, schoolyard fences are in need of replacement. Open Space Survey takers identified basketball courts as the top recreational facility that needs to be in greater supply in the City. The School District should look for opportunities on school grounds to establish more basketball courts.

11 THE DICKINSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL YARD LOOKS LIKE A PRISON YARD. NEEDS LAWN, TREES, GREEN SPACE... ??

# **6.3.5** Consider Alternative Recreational Programming

The Open Space Survey results reflected a desire for greater diversity among the types of recreational programming and facilities. Along the same vein, conversations with the Recreation Commission and dialogues with the community revealed the sentiment that enthusiasm for some recreational activities that have traditionally been the focus of recreation in Hamtramck, such as baseball and soccer, have waned in the past ten years or so, as evidenced by lower participation in team sports and less frequent utilization of sports fields in Hamtramck's parks. While traditional sports such as baseball and soccer should continue to have a place in the offerings of the Hamtramck's parks and play spaces, the City and Recreation Department should continue to pursue the goal of meeting the recreational needs of the community by testing the waters of alternative programming.

Additionally, creating venues for sports and recreation activities that serve particular social and cultural cohorts could have local spending multiplier effects for music, food, nightlife, and entertainment. Alternative sports such as skateboarding, breakdancing, and roller derby play off of Hamtramck's subcultures; accommodating them locally could help Hamtramck's distinct identity emerge through its public spaces.

#### 6.4

# CONSIDER LONG-TERM OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW RECREATION SPACES

Given the density of the City and relatively inequitable distribution of existing parks, new park spaces should be considered to better serve all residents in Hamtramck regardless of their address. These improvements are intended as smaller open spaces that provide added value to the City's neighborhoods and business community.

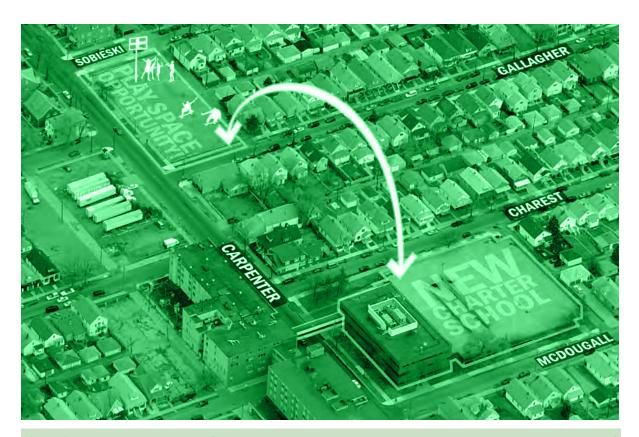
# **6.4.1** Establish New Park Spaces on Vacant Lots





While some of the vacant lots found in every neighborhood are good candidates for infill development, others should be considered as permanent park spaces. Any public investment in new parks should be guided by demonstrated resident stewardship and capacity to reduce maintenance demands on the City. Opportunities for new parks include:

- > Commor between Nagel and Fleming, currently a vacant lot that is the target of frequent illegal dumping
- > The undevelopable triangle bounded by Buffalo, Evaline, and Ellery would make a nice passive park space for neighboring residents.
- > Due to its relative isolation from nearby homes, the vacant lot on Carpenter Street is an opportunity for a new active park including basketball courts. The new charter school on Carpenter would need to be a sponsor for this park as its facilities could help to serve school children as well as local residents.



Above: An underutilized parking lot on Carpenter may be a good opportunity to provide needed open space on the north side of Hamtramck, where a new charter school is expected to open soon. Below: an undevelopable triangular lot bounded by Buffalo, Evaline, and Ellery would make an excellent neighborhood pocket park.



#### **6.4.2** Create a Linear Park and Multi-Use Path Around the Town Center Superblock

The Michigan State Department of Natural Resource's Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans offers a distinct view of "Integrated Community Planning":

In contrast to the traditional manner of thinking about the management of parks within cities, the National Recreation and Park Association challenges recreation providers to think in terms of cities existing within parks. People do not congregate, recreate, or simply enjoy the outdoors only in park land designated for recreation purposes. They use streets [preferably with sidewalks], greenways, town squares, plazas, marketplaces, conservation lands, and numerous other areas, both publicly and privately owned...Taking this perspective requires thinking and planning beyond the borders of traditional parks to a park system connected by trails, greenways, and other publicly-used spaces. It may also require increased coordination with other public agencies, private businesses, and/or non-profit organizations.1

It is precisely this concept of thinking holistically about urban spaces and their intrinsic potential as positive elements of the public realm—in essence, a network of spaces together constituting a kind of urban park greater than the sum of its parts—that was a driving concept behind the idea of creating a linear park and multi-use path around Hamtramck Town Center, the Henry Ford facility, and the Hamtramck Housing Commission senior living towers. The Town Center Superblock has an abundance of well-maintained landscaped areas surrounding the Henry Ford facility and senior living towers, but they are completely fenced off from



**40.** Existing Town Center plan view and issues

the surrounding community. The suburban-style retail development is balkanized from Hamtramck's main commercial corridor despite its extensive frontage on Campau due to the overgenerous supply of surface parking, as well as detached from the surrounding neighborhood in general. Tapping into the potential of the site's landscaped areas and rethinking its dead zones, establishing a linear park and perimeter path with linkages to the proposed Hamtramck Bikeway [3.4.2] and connections to Veteran's Park provides a formal strategy for knitting the Town Center into the surrounding urban fabric, embedding the site in the public realm—the "urban park" of Hamtramck.

# > A 16-foot wide multi-use path would be well appreciated by Hamtramckans, who are vocal about the City's great need for walking and running paths. The conceptual design for the path and improvements to the Town Center site's Campau frontage are made possible by the elimination of the unnecessary turning lane on the west side of Campau, which currently runs along the entire length of Town Center, by narrowing the travel lanes to an acceptable urban standard, and by pushing the surface parking back slightly into the site. The path would provide an easily accessible recreation option for

senior housing residents and visitors to the medi-

cal center, and residents in general.

# TOWN CENTER ISSUES

- A BERM ACTS AS PEDESTRIAN BARRIER
- **B** NO SIDEWALKS AT ENTRANCES
- **©** TURNING LANE NOT NECESSARY
- D LACK OF CAMPAU PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS ENCOURAGES JAYWALKING, LIMITS ACCESSIBILITY FOR SENIORS AND DISABLED
- E) EXPANSIVE IMPERMEABLE SURFACE IMPACTS STORMWATER MANAGEMENT; EXCESSIVE AMOUNT OF PARKING; UNDERUTILIZED REAL ESTATE
- F STORES HAVE NO PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION TO STREET
- G UNDERUTILIZED GREEN SPACE COULD BE AN ASSET TO THE COMMUNITY
- H BARRIERS TO NEIGHBORHOOD DISRUPT URBAN FABRIC AND REINFORCE FORTRESS MENTALITY

1



**41.** Proposed Town Center Retrofit conceptual plan view

# TOWN CENTER RETROFIT

- (A) MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT
- (B) 16' MULTI USER PATH
- (C) URBAN PLAZA FLEX SPACE
- D PARKING LOT GREENING & ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS
- E PERMEABLE PAVEMENT TEMPORARY USE FLEX SPACE/ FUTURE DEVELOPMENT SITE
- F CAMPAU BIKE/PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNAL
- G BIKE CONNECTION TO VET'S PARK
- (H) MULTI USER PATH
- (I) RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING OPPORTUNITIES
- J HOLBROOK BIKE/PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNAL

- > Unlike Town Center's current landscaped strip along Campau, which offers only one entrance into the parking lot mid-block [which creates a major barrier to accessibility for the many elderly and handicapped residents who rely on the commercial services near the Henry Ford facility and senior living complex, the landscaped linear park between the multi-use path and the sidewalk is highly permeable, with cross-paths provided at regular intervals.
- > An urban plaza flex space would provide a venue for small-scale community events, farm stands, and casual recreating.
- > Adding a punctuation mark to the re-envisioned approach toward the core of Hamtramck's downtown from the south, a mixed use development proposed for the corner of Holbrook and Campau [4.10.2] would help establish a more appropriate urban gateway to the central stretch of Campau.
- > More information on potential connections to the Hamtramck Bikeway are presented in Section [3.4.2].

Implementing a project such as this would require bringing the City, the DDA, the Economic Development Corporation, the owners of Town Center, and Henry Ford Hospital administrators to the table to discuss possibilities in a truly public-private endeavor with the potential for multiple benefits for each partner in the endeavor.

#### **6.4.3** Create a Teen Center/ Membership Gym

The youth that participated in the Master Plan process stated loud and clear that they need more indoor recreation spaces in the City. Among the many ideas offered, creating a teen center figured most prominently. Programming at the Hamtramck Community Center is more focused on younger children



**42.** Proposed Town Center linear park and multi-use path conceptual section

and there are limited activities for the City's teens. A center devoted to their interests would immensely popular and help to address some of the violence that occurs between teens after school hours. As a long-term strategy, the City, Recreation Commission, local non-profits devoted to youth services and the DDA should look for appropriate spaces that could host a range of programming.

8801 Conant Street, Hamtramck MI 3501 Hamtramck Drive, Hamtramck, MI



#### INTRODUCTION

#### **Redevelopment Ready Communities**

Redevelopment Ready Communities is a statewide program that certifies communities actively engaging stakeholders and planning for the future. RRC certification signals to business owners, developers, and investors that a community has removed development barriers by incorporating deliberate, fair, and consistent processes. Certified RRCs have undergone a rigorous review of their planning and development practices and have invested in creating transparent, efficient and predictable processes that promote investment.

This priority Redevelopment Ready Site has been targeted by the community for investment. Upon RRC Certification, communities gain the expertise of the Redevelopment Services Team focused on proactive site redevelopment of their priority Redevelopment Ready Sites through high quality and in-depth technical assistance, marketing and promotion. By partnering with an RRC certified community, you can help turn a community's vision into reality while experiencing a smooth development process.

In 2019, the City of Hamtramck is in the process of meeting the State of Michigan's guidelines and attaining RRC certification. Hamtramck began pursuing the certification in April 2017 as City leadership completed best practice training sessions and undertook the self-evaluation of municipal development standards. The City subsequently passed a formal resolution of intent to participate in September of 2017. Hamtramck's strengths in the attainment process are its

prescriptive and action-oriented master plan, elements of its zoning code, and in its proactive public engagement strategy. Meanwhile, challenges to RRC certification include the need to streamline the development review process and select and market redevelopment sites. The City has defined actions and a timeline for addressing these challenges through the end of 2019.

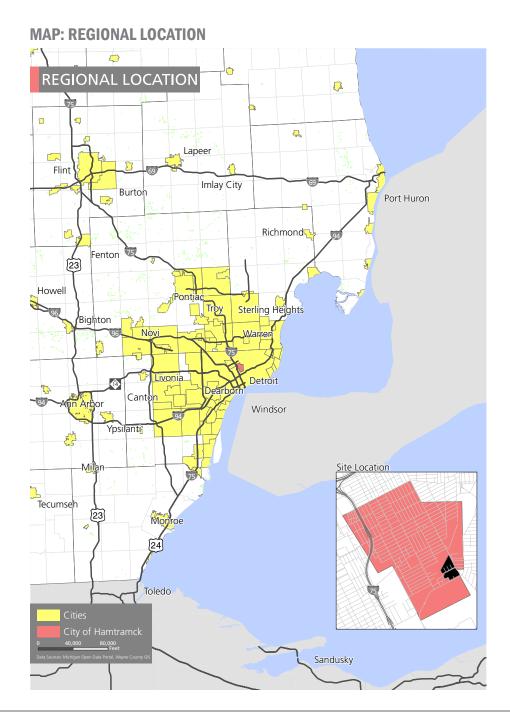
#### **Hamtramck History**

Hamtramck has its roots as an immigrant farming community, like many communities in Southeast Michigan. First settled by the French in the late 18th century, it maintained its farming character until the 20th century. In 1914 the Dodge automotive plant "Dodge Main" was built in Hamtramck, attracting many laborers of Polish descent who were looking for work in the region. At the turn of the decade (1920) Hamtramck had a surging population of 46,616, monstrous when compared to a population of 3,589 a decade prior.

In 1920 Andrew "Rube" Foster, a hall of fame baseball player and executive, organized the Negro National League, a professional baseball league for African-Americans. The Detroit Stars were one of the nine original teams in the NNL and played their games originally in Mack Park (Detroit, MI) and then Hamtramck Stadium after Mack Park suffered a fire. Over the following decades various African American baseball leagues formed and folded, and the last game was played in Hamtramck Stadium in 1937.1 A few years later the City of Hamtramck purchased the stadium and developed a recreation area in the southern area of the city that included Hamtramck Stadium and Veterans' Park directly to the west of the stadium. The stadium is currently only one of twelve former NNL facilities still standing.

Throughout the mid-20th century, Hamtramck remained dependent on the automotive industry as the primary economic driver. As many automotive plants left the core Detroit metro region the communities reliant on the industry suffered, and Hamtramck was not immune to these changes. To bring automotive manufacturing back to the area, the Cities of Hamtramck and Detroit seized land in south Hamtramck and the "Poletown" neighborhood in Detroit in 1980, despite residents' protests. The land was given to General Motors for a new assembly plant, the construction of which resulted in the demolition over a thousand homes. business, and churches. The seized land within the City of Hamtramck was not as residential compared to the land within Detroit, mainly occupied by a vacant Chrysler factory that would have cost millions to tear down. The development of the automotive center created a hard barrier between Hamtramck and Detroit that still exists.2

At the beginning of the 21st century, Hamtramck entered Emergency Financial Status, symptomatic of the declining auto industry. During these years, the city's population became increasingly diverse with new residents from the Middle East and Southern Asia coming to the city. In 2013, Hamtramck elected the first Muslim majority City Council in the United States. The following year, the city entered emergency management for the second time. Almost forty years after it opened, General Motors announced in late 2018 plans to indefinitely idle the assembly plant located in Hamtramck and Detroit, though as of this writing that decision may be in flux. Its closure would leave a physical scar from an industry that brought the city to prominence and subsequent decline.3



#### **MAP: SUBAREA PLAN SITE**



#### **SITE CONDITIONS**

#### Physical

The redevelopment site is immediately north of the GM assembly center and consists of two properties, 8801 Conant (Missant Building) and 3501 Hamtramck Dr. (Dickerson Detention Facility).

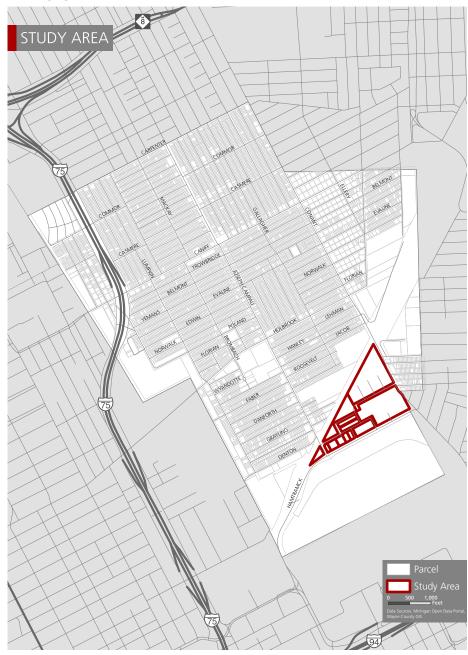
The structure at 8801 Conant was formerly home to A H Missant, Inc., a contract truck hauling company. The company incorporated in 1960 and operated for more than 50 years before closing its doors in 2016.4 The property's paved areas are cracked and overgrown, the landscaping and other greenspace are unkempt, and the building structure is aging. Although the property has been historically industrial, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy does not report any site contamination.<sup>5</sup> With the site's age, however, significant investment will be needed to convert it to another use. The parcel is relatively flat with an elevation change of fewer than 10 feet across the entire property, indicating no natural gradient for drainage, and on-site stormwater management will be needed. In August 2019, the property is listed at \$1.975 million.6 It is well connected with the surrounding area by a network of bike lanes and roads.

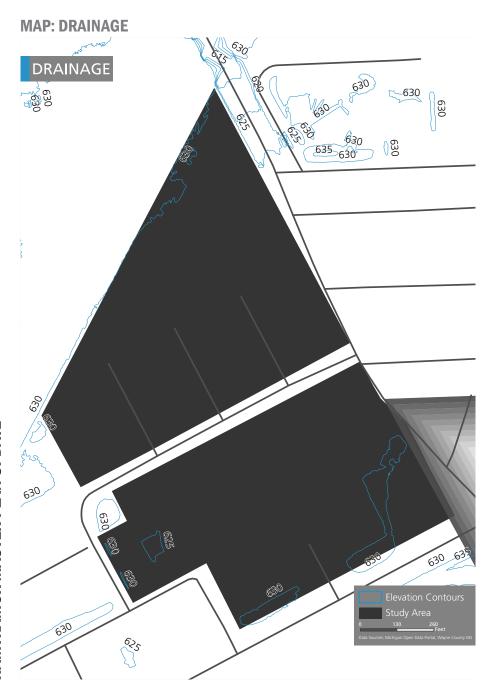
The smaller of the site's properties is the Dickerson Detention Facility, which encompasses 14.7 acres and is one of three Wayne County Jails. Wayne County is expected to complete a new criminal justice complex in 2022, which will consolidate all three of its existing facilities. Post consolidation, the detention facility on this site will become vacant. The structure is 4 stories tall and has 587,000 square feet of nonresidential space.

This parcel has two leaking underground storage tanks which have not been closed and will require remediation to avoid further environmental contamination. In addition, the site is contaminated with trichloroethylene and perchloroethylene, both carcinogenic substances, but intermediate remediation has already been conducted. The parcel also has a slightly more varied topography with the lowest elevation at 628 feet above sea level and the highest at 633 feet. This topography slopes northeast. Like the other parcel, this property connects with the surrounding community through a network of bike lanes and roads.

According to the 2010 Master Plan, both properties are served by the City of Hamtramck's water and combined sewer system, which runs underneath Conant Street and transports wastewater and stormwater. Stormwater control is a major issue in Hamtramck, and although the City has capacity improvements planned to the Conant Street sewer, on-site stormwater retention will also be important. The City of Hamtramck's fire and police departments also provide emergency services on site. The site is also relatively well-served by internet providers; multiple entities, including AT&T and Comcast, provide DSL and cable broadband to support businesses and households.<sup>8</sup>

#### **MAP: STUDY AREA**





#### **TABLE: SITE PARAMETERS**

	8801 CONANT	3501 DENTON
Current Zoning	Industrial	Industrial
Building Height Limit	6 Stories - 80ft	6 Stories - 80ft
Dwelling Units Per Acre	0	0
Required Parking	1 space per 500 Sq ft of gross area	1 space per 500 Sq ft of gross area
Existing Structures on Site	Yes	Yes
Existing Structure Size	1 Story 249,100 sq ft	4 Stories 587,000 sq ft
Describe the Existing Structure	Vacant logistics facility	Wayne County detention facility
Preferred Development	eferred Development Mixed commercial and residential Mixed commercial are residential	
Master Plan Designation	Industrial	Public/Institutional

#### **TABLE: OWNERSHIP & CONTACT**

	8801 CONANT	3501 DENTON	
Name	Missant Building	Dickerson Detention Facility	
Address	8801 Conant St	3501 Denton St	
Status	For sale	Occupied	
Sale Price	\$1,975,000		
Lot Size	16.4 acres	14.8 acres	
Parcel Number	41-005-16-0001-300	41-005-13-0204-300	
Current Owner	Privately owned	Wayne County Sherriff Department	
Owner Phone			
Owner Email			
Community Contact			
Community Contact Phone			
Community Contact Email			

#### **ZONING AND SITE DESIGN**

With the site's history as a center for logistics and institutional uses, the properties' current zoning designation is "Industrial" which allows for a variety of manufacturing-related uses.9 The City's zoning ordinance does not, however, allow for planned unit development designation, which allows largescale redevelopment projects some flexibility. Hamtramck's zoning also has a set of landscaping requirements that mandate levels of vegetation coverage surrounding new buildings, although these requirements are not specific enough to set landscaping with the community's vision. 10 With these challenges, the City of Hamtramck will need to determine a process that allows development flexibility while also articulating the community's vision - compact, dense, and walkable forms and using the Hamtramck's unique identities to inform uses.



# SURROUNDING USES AND AMENITIES

With the site's position in southern Hamtramck. it is uniquely situated near lively and recently emerging commercial districts. Downtown Hamtramck extends along Joseph Campau Avenue between Caniff and Holbrook Streets less than a mile north of the properties and is often cited as one of the only viable commercial main streets in southeast Michigan. As noted in the 2010 Master Plan, the district hosts a diversity of retail, specialty food markets, and eateries associated with the community's diverse population, all of which generate foot traffic. Conant Street north of Holbrook is another emerging commercial corridor within walking distance to the site - just about 1/3 of a mile north. New Hamtramck-owned retail, entertainment, and dining venues have opened since 2010, contributing to the area's renewal. All of these districts are "bike-friendly" per the Detroit Greenways Collaborative.

Veteran's Park is also situated immediately northwest of the site, which presents an opportunity for the site and park to support one another. The 2010 Master Plan identified the 26-acre facility as one of the community's "greatest challenges among the City's open spaces" because of perceived safety issues, the presence of underused space, and its sheer size. Correspondingly, the green space is slated to undergo reinvestment, including refurbishing both Keyworth Stadium and the Historic Hamtramck Stadium, and the addition of bike and pedestrian pathways that extend to surrounding neighborhoods. All of this will enhance

the space's visibility and make it inviting for users. Repurposing of the two properties in the study area should seek to relate well to Veterans Park, considering the benefits that the facility could hold in attracting visitors.

The site also exhibits a strong relationship with the City of Detroit. The site relates well with the traditional Detroit neighborhoods immediately east, which have historic housing characteristic of the City. The properties are also served by Detroit Department of Transportation's Line 12, which runs on Conant Street and the route stops directly at the site - at Missant Drive southbound and Christopher Street northbound. 11 The bus line also provides strong connections to destinations such as Belle Isle and downtown Detroit, which could be a boon in attracting visitors. Per the 2010 Master Plan, Hamtramck is also seeking to work with the City of Detroit to strengthen bus service and to provide routes with the Eastern Market and university campus areas.

#### The Community

The two properties are positioned in south Hamtramck and hold unique potential because of the community's diverse lifestyles. Data from the American Community Survey show that the City's population of 21,949 residents has held nearly constant from 22,423 in 2010 - only a small net loss of 474 residents. This trend was mirrored in the southern residential portion of the City located immediately north of the site and defined by Michigan's census tract 5528. An estimated 5,241 residents lived in these southern neighborhoods in 2017, comprising about one-quarter of the City's total population. The population was nearly unchanged from 5,251 residents in 2010.

Hamtramck is well known for its concentration

of college students at Wayne and the College for Creative Studies, as well as artists, and ethnic communities. The City's population is young almost two-thirds of residents were under the age of 40 in 2017. The proportion of residents under 40 was even higher (70.5%) in the southern extent of Hamtramck, which is home to younger families and households of diverse ethnicities. In keeping with a younger population, nearly one third (29.4%) of residents were enrolled in some form of an educational program in 2017. About one-fifth of these students, an estimated 1,335 people, were enrolled in college or graduate school. Hamtramck also celebrates its cultural diversity. An estimated 14% of the community's population was African American in 2017, while about one-quarter of residents were Asian and from many different countries of origin.

Although Hamtramck was hit hard by the recession, revitalization has been steady throughout the 2010s. Median household incomes have held constant or even increased whereas in surrounding Detroit they have continued to decline. Residential vacancy rates in the City have also dropped from their highpoint in the recession. Residents' employment is nearly as diverse as their backgrounds. Traditional manufacturing as well as in emerging services - healthcare and education, retail, and arts, entertainment, recreation, and food services - provide large shares of residents' jobs in 2017. The City's population is diverse, which means that site uses to reflect these identities and use community preferences to support new businesses.

TABLE: POPULATION DATA: SOUTHERN HAMTRAMCK VS. CITY OF HAMTRAMCK

	SOUTH HAMTRAMCK (track 5528)	CITY OF HAMTRAMCK			
NUMBER					
Total Population	5,241	21,949			
Population enrolled in school	1,606	6,454			
Enrolled in college or graduate school	291	1,335			
PERECENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION					
19 years or younger	40.5%	35.4%			
20 to 39 years	30.0%	31.8%			
40 to 59 years	19.8%	20.9%			
60 years or older	9.7%	11.9%			

SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 ESTIMATES

TABLE: SOCIOECONOMIC DATA: SOUTHERN HAMTRAMCK VS. CITY OF HAMTRAMCK

		2010	2017
CITY OF HAMTRAMCK	Median household income (\$)	24,240	24,369
	Households with annual income \$25,000-74,999 (%)	40.4	37.4
	Unemployment rate (%)	17.7	12.9
	Residential vacancy rate (%)	24.2	21.0
SOUTH HAMTRAMCK (track 5528)	Median household income (\$)	18,584	18,908
	Households with annual income \$25,000-74,999 (%)	24.4	26.0
	Unemployment rate (%)	15.9	16.3
	Residential vacancy rate (%)	24.1	22.3

 $SOURCES: 2010\ DECENNIAL\ CENSUS\ \&\ AMERICAN\ COMMUNITY\ SURVEY, 2013-2017\ ESTIMATES$ 

# COMMUNITY NEEDS AND POTENTIAL USES

While a wide array of uses are possible on these two properties, the community has put some thought into the types it would like to see and could most readily support. These are derived primarily from business "gaps" determined through the community's 2010 Master Plan. Residents see the City's economic future rooted in its existing strengths, including its diverse cultures and vibrant blend of arts, food, and local retail. When new businesses leverage these identities, they will enjoy support from customers who eat, shop, and spend time locally.

#### **Food Culture**

In the 2010 Master Plan, Hamtramckans expressed a need for more physical space to support the City's lively food scene. Kitchen incubators are an emerging trend that work by providing a space for food entrepreneurs to get their ideas off the ground with lower start-up cost and risk. These "shared kitchens" are accessible to new food entrepreneurs and provide the expensive equipment and space needed to start a small-scale food business, in exchange for monthly rates. Success has been achieved in Michigan by a popular incubator space in Grand Rapids, which charges monthly rates for kitchen space, and fees for technical assistance, classes, and events.<sup>12</sup>

Another related possibility for the site is the establishment of a local food co-op. This type of business would act as an outlet for local food products to be marketed and sold, especially those of the Detroit urban farming movement. This could

allow residents to support the local economy, encourage local production, and boost the City's image as a place for local and sustainable foods.

#### Hospitality

The ability to accommodate overnight visitors is an essential component of a tourism-based economy, however, Hamtramck has unmet demand for commercial lodging. In 2019, there were two hostels in the City along with a number of properties listed on the shared-lodging site AirBnB, but no traditional commercial lodging facilities. For travelers to Detroit and Hamtramck, the lack of a bed and breakfast or small-scale hotel limits their ability to spend time and money at local venues. The site could easily accommodate this type of establishment, which could, in turn, provide patronage for nearby businesses.

#### Retail

Hamtramck residents identified several retail gaps in the 2010 master planning process, noting that the community lacks specialized establishments that cater to local tastes and arts scene. The City has gained a bike accessory shop and a new independent movie venue showing foreign language films in the intervening years, but could still use a musical instrument store and an art supply store. The community also expressed a need for other everyday types of goods and services, including a brewpub, pet supply store, and mid-sized grocery store such as Trader Joe's. With the often cited saying "retail follows rooftops," these types of uses are likely supportable in the community, with its declining residential vacancy rates.

Residents also expressed support for a type of retail "mash-up", which could include space for a variety of mutually supportive business tenants including food and beverage stores, coffee shops, bookstores, wine bars, or art galleries. These types

of tenants can draw diverse users and to encourage shopping and dining as an "experience".

#### Arts and Education

The community is well-known as a hub for artists, however, as one resident stated in the 2010 Master Plan, "Hamtramck doesn't have enough art outlets to support the amount of creative production that happens in the City". This highlights a need for permanent art galleries, design shops, and art boutiques, which could be accommodated on the site, and would create a draw for locals and visitors.

An educational institution would also fit well with Hamtramck's mix of students, artists, and cultural diversity. In 2010, the City envisioned that this could take the form of a compact satellite facility of a larger institution, which would have curricula focused on language and cultural studies as well as arts and design. An institution of this type could also meet the community's need for a new performing arts space for locals to showcase their work and host events, and for a design space with equipment for craftspeople.

#### **DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

The City of Hamtramck's zoning code provides little guidance for large-scale development. The following considerations have been determined by the Planning Commission as important to the success of the study area's redevelopment.

#### **Building Placement**

The site's two major properties are situated on Conant Street, which is a high visibility thoroughfare carrying long-distance traffic between Detroit and Hamtramck. The roadway's average daily traffic count is 7,400 vehicles, and so the buildings should be configured directly on the street to draw in vehicular and pedestrian traffic. <sup>13</sup> Placement along the front lot line would also match commercial zoning standards along Conant Street. <sup>14</sup> A strong relationship between buildings and Conant Street could also help connect with businesses to the north.

#### Circulation

Pedestrian and nonmotorized circulation will be key components of the site. Per the 2010 Master Plan, the City has planned widened sidewalks and street trees along Conant Street, which will enhance pedestrian connectivity to the north. Meanwhile, improved walking pathways are planned in Veteran's Park with the facility's update. Although rail lines currently impede travel between the park and this site, new pedestrian linkages between the two locations should be a priority, considering a revitalized park's potential to support commercial uses. Vehicular parking should be situated to the rear of both properties and behind buildings, in keeping with zoning standards on Conant Street. 15

#### Landscaping

Landscaping determines a place's scenic quality and affects how visitors use it. The placement of trees is a particularly important component. According to the U.S. forest service, shoppers report frequenting, spending more time, and spending up to 12% more on goods and services in tree-lined commercial areas. In the 2010 Master Plan, the City set increased tree canopy as a community-wide goal, and so this sites' redevelopment should further that priority. Deciduous trees facilitate passive solar heating and cooling when positioned along structures' west and south sides. Placing trees along walkways also invites users to spend time outside by scaling the environment to pedestrians.

#### Stormwater Management

Effective stormwater management will be key with the site's nearly flat elevation; only 10 feet of change from west to east. Financing the placement of trees in public rights of way along Hamtramck Drive and Conant Street would be a strong start, especially considering citywide and regional goals to control stormwater on roadways.<sup>16</sup> Street trees could also help manage runoff in conjunction with the planned sewer main reconstruction below Conant Street identified in the 2010 Master Plan, which will be designed to catch excess stormwater from above ground tree trenches. Other features including bioswales, rain gardens, and retention basins could be added in the site's west, to maintain visual connections between the Conant Street and the site's buildings.

# HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION

#### Housing

Hamtramck's population has grown in recent years, but this growth has occurred in the City's existing housing stock - few dwelling units have been built in the past decade. Some formerly vacant housing units have been rehabilitated, while others have been converted from single-family to multi-family units. The community finds itself somewhat "underhoused" in 2019, and more options will be needed in subsequent years to attract new residents and households. Further, new options will need to take diverse formats beyond the community's traditional single-family structures to accommodate potential residents' preferences.

A housing target market analysis, conducted in September 2019, used the region's migration and

demographic patterns to forecast potential new residents' housing demand in terms of format, tenure, and price. According to the study, the City could potentially capture 140 new households annually, provided their preferences are met.<sup>17</sup> These potential new households will have diverse lifestyles and prefer high-density formats. For instance, new demand would support a projected 48 new units of urban loft space in multiple floor buildings annually.<sup>18</sup> This type of housing could be provided on the site above commercial ground floors - especially considering that the community prioritized infill housing along nearby south Joseph Campau Avenue in the 2010 Master Plan.

#### Transportation

Multimodal transportation is essential in Hamtramck. Local bike lanes are popular choices for residents to get between destinations in the community, while long-distance trails in Detroit are popular among visitors and connect regional attractions. Further, recent planning efforts have recorded increased spending from travelers stringing together different visits via bike travel. The

#### FIGURE: MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING DIAGRAM





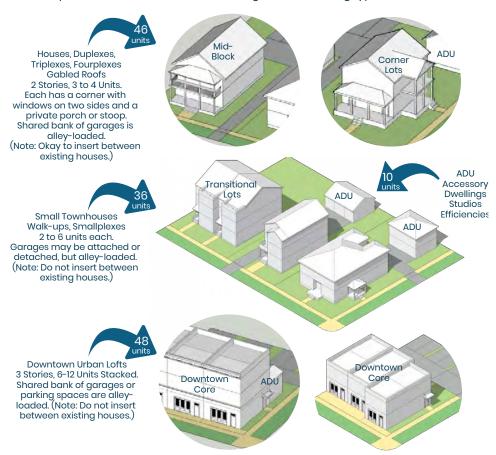
site should accommodate walking and biking and fit with the City's planned projects to encourage nonmotorized forms, considering these potential advantages in boosting visitorship.

Hamtramck has several projects planned to improve its multimodal system. Per the 2010 Master Plan, dedicated bike lanes four feet in width and running north and south on Conant Street are in the works with the street's reconstruction. Connections between the Dequindre Cut and the Inner Circle Greenway with local bike lanes are also planned, which would create a draw. The City also has planned pedestrian amenities along Conant Street to facilitate travel on foot. The site should integrate with these projects and could offer supportive amenities such as bike racks.

Incorporating residential uses on the site also holds strong potential if the planned commuter rail service identified in the 2010 Master Plan were implemented on the Grand Trunk Railroad line running immediately north of the properties, which would connect to jobs throughout the region.

# All Formats | Hamtramck Annual Market Potential | The Year 2025

Examples of recommended and missing middle housing types for urban infill.





Source: Exhibits assembled by LandUseUSA with permission from the Incremental Development Alliance © with all rights reserved. Intended for educational purposes only and may be reused only with additional permissions. ADU indicates accessory dwellings, studios, and efficiencies.

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SOURCE: LAND USE USA. THE CITY OF HAMTRAMCK TARGET MARKET ANALYSIS HOUSING STUDY

## **RETAIL MARKETS**

ESRI's business analyst software sources publicly available data to determine how and where residents of a given community spend their money. "Leakage" retail markets are those where a city's residents travel outside the community boundary to procure the good or service, and often correspond to markets where local businesses could "capture" local spending by providing more of the product. The table below shows these leakage markets in Hamtramck and estimates the monetary value of residents' purchasing leaving the community annually.

The City's leakage markets match several of the commercial "gaps" that residents pointed to in the master planning process. For instance, residents spend large amounts of money on specialty retail goods including home furnishings, hobby, and musical instruments stores, and department store merchandise outside of Hamtramck's boundary, yearly. Harnessing even a portion of this potential revenue could be enough to support a new business, and so the configuration of buildings to accommodate these tenants' space needs is a consideration.

ESRI also aggregates similar data to estimate residents' purchasing patterns for different goods and services. The two tables below show these per person annual expenditures within geographic distances from the site – 5,10, and 15-minute drives and walks from the location. It shows that residents within a reasonable walk or drive from the properties undertake activities associated with the commercial "gaps" alluded to in Hamtramck's master plan - purchasing groceries and prepared food, clothing, and entertainment, for instance. These are residents whose spending could perhaps be attracted to the site if businesses provided the corresponding goods and services.

#### **TABLE: HAMTRAMCK LEAKAGE RETAIL MARKETS**

RETAIL CATEGORY	ESTIMATED ANNUAL LEAKAGE (\$)	NUMBER OF HAMTRAMCK BUSINESSES
Department store merchandise	11,389,667	3
Sporting goods, hobby, and musical instrument stores	2,078,181	2
Special food services	132,525	2
Furniture stores	3,199,813	1
Home furnishings stores	1,370,737	0
Florists	46,897	1

SOURCE: ESRI BUSINESS ANALYST

#### TABLE: RETAIL PURCHASING BY DRIVE TIME

RETAIL CATEGORY	5 MINUTES	10 MINUTES	15 MINUTES
Men's apparel	\$183	\$184	\$210
Women's apparel	\$310	\$319	\$372
Food for home use	\$2,311	\$2,370	\$2,760
Food away from home	\$1,593	\$1,624	\$1,887
Alcoholic beverages	\$240	\$241	\$279
Fees and admissions to events	\$283	\$278	\$326

SOURCE: ESRI BUSINESS ANALYST

#### TABLE: RETAIL PURCHASING BY WALK TIME

RETAIL CATEGORY	5 MINUTES	10 MINUTES	15 MINUTES
Men's apparel	\$175	\$183	\$172
Women's apparel	\$271	\$320	\$290
Food for home use	\$2,022	\$2,347	\$2,137
Food away from home	\$1,331	\$1,632	\$1,481
Alcoholic beverages	\$213	\$266	\$237
Fees and admissions to events	\$267	\$314	\$278

SOURCE: ESRI BUSINESS ANALYST

# AVAILABLE SYNERGIES AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

#### **EPA Smart Growth Assistance Grants**

The EPA occasionally offers grants to support activities that enhance the quality of development and protect human health and the environment. <sup>19</sup> This includes smart growth projects and those that qualify as transit- oriented development. Grants are made through an application process with the office and are available.

#### **EPA Brownfield Grants**

The federal agency also provides a variety of support for the assessment, cleanup, and development of contaminated properties. This includes assessment, cleanup, and planning grants, as well project financing from a revolving loan fund.<sup>20</sup>

#### Tax Abatements

The City of Hamtramck is classified as a "Core Community" by the State of Michigan and with this designation, commercial and residential projects are qualified for a variety of tax incentives from the State of Michigan. This includes brownfield tax credits, obsolete structure tax credits, and energy efficiency tax abatements.

# Economic Development Authority and Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

Currently dormant, these two agencies are intended to support economic development projects throughout Hamtramck. The EDA can issue bonds to finance redevelopment while the BRA provides similar support for contaminated sites. When active, the two boards share membership and meet consecutively.

# RETURN-ON-INVESTMENT ANALYSIS

In developing the South Hamtramck Subarea Plan, it was important to conduct a return-on-investment (ROI) analysis to help guide recommendations for the area. Using the data platform, Urban Footprint, the ROI analysis evaluates the following six scenarios:

- » Industrial Focus
- » Office/Industrial
- » Village Residential
- » Village Commercial
- » Large-Lot Residential Area
- » Town Mixed Use

The "Industrial Focus" scenario was selected because it is the closest to the existing conditions. In general, an "Industrial Focus" scenario tends to yield the greatest return on investment for a City because it is typically a large land area that requires minimal services and supports very few people while generating significant tax revenue. However, an industrial property will only yield this return when occupied. The subject properties have been vacant for some time now, identifying that an industrial focus is not working for this area and it is time to try something new. The "Office/Industrial" scenario was chosen because it would represent the smallest change from the existing land use adding supportive office use-and thus a low investment. The "Village Residential" and "Village Commercial" scenarios were selected because they best fit within the built form and zoning regulations

that currently exist in Hamtramck: maintaining a single land use in 3-4 story buildings. The "Large Lot Residential Area" scenario it is often thought of as desirable because it brings into a community new residents of sufficient income to afford this expensive housing format; in this view, the cost of providing services and relatively low tax burden assessed to residential property is sometimes overlooked. Finally, the "Town Mixed Use" scenario was selected because it represents a mixed-use scenario at a slightly higher density that is consistent with the existing built form in Hamtramck, with buildings that could be 1-2 stories taller. Because this site represents a significant portion of the City of Hamtramck's total area, and because it is somewhat isolated by the rail line, a blend of uses is important to ensuring a complete vision for this portion of the community.

Based on the results of this analysis, the "Town Mixed Use" scenario would yield the greatest return on investment for Hamtramck. This scenario creates the highest concentrations of both residents and employment, which both reduces demand on residential service by increasing density and increases tax revenue generated by including commercial use. This scenario also provides the greatest diversity in housing formats, which is one of the greatest needs identified in the 2019 target market analysis. The tables to the right provide a summary of the six scenarios including figures on density, land use information, and residential and employment mix numbers.

#### **TABLE: TOWN MIXED USE**

**CATEGORY: MIXED USE** 

DENSITY			
	Gross	Net	
Residential:	24.5 DU/Ac	36.0 DU/Ac	
Employment:	48.5 Emp/Ac	71.3 Emp/Ac	
LAND USE INFORMATION			
Parcel Area:	Streets, Parks, Clvic Area:		
68%	32%		
RESIDENTIAL MIX			
Single family large lot:	Single family small lot:	Townhome:	Multi- Family
0%	0%	21%	79%
EMPLOYMENT MIX			
Retail:	Office:	Industrial:	Other:

# TABLE: OFFICE/INDUSTRIAL

**CATEGORY: MIXED USE** 

DENSITY				
	Gross	Net		
Residential:	0.0 DU/Ac	0.0 DU/Ac		
Employment:	23.0 Emp/Ac	27.5 Emp/Ac		
LAND USE INFO	LAND USE INFORMATION			
Parcel Area:	Streets, Parks, Clvic Area:			
84%	16%			
RESIDENTIAL MIX				
Single family large lot:	Single family small lot:	Townhome:	Multi- Family	
0%	0%	0%	0%	
EMPLOYMENT MIX				
Retail:	Office:	Industrial:	Other:	
3%	40%	54%	3%	

# TABLE: INDUSTRIAL FOCUS CATEGORY: INDUSTRIAL/WAREHOUSE

DENSITY				
	Gross	Net		
Residential:	0.0 DU/Ac	0.0 DU/Ac		
Employment:	14.8 Emp/Ac	17.6 Emp/Ac		
LAND USE INFORMATION				
Parcel Area:	Streets, Parks, Clvic Area:			
84%	16%			
RESIDENTIAL MIX				
Single family large lot:	Single family small lot:	Townhome:	Multi- Family	
0%	0%	0%	0%	
EMPLOYMENT MIX				
Retail:	Office:	Industrial:	Other:	
5%	4%	86%	5%	

# TABLE: VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL

**CATEGORY: RESIDENTIAL** 

DENSITY			
	Gross	Net	
Residential:	16.5 DU/Ac	22.9 DU/Ac	
Employment:	9.6 Emp/Ac	13.4 Emp/Ac	
LAND USE INFO	RMATION		
Parcel Area:	Streets, Parks	, Clvic Area:	
72%	28%		
RESIDENTIAL MIX			
Single family large lot:	Single family small lot:	Townhome:	Multi- Family
0%	26%	74%	0%
EMPLOYMENT MIX			
Retail:	Office:	Industrial:	Other:
0%	65%	0%	35%

## TABLE: VILLAGE COMMERCIAL

**CATEGORY: COMMERCIAL** 

DENSITY

	Gross	Net		
Residential:	3.4 DU/Ac	4.8 DU/Ac		
Employment:	32.0 Emp/Ac	45.7 Emp/Ac		
LAND USE INFO	LAND USE INFORMATION			
Parcel Area:	Streets, Parks, Clvic Area:			
70%	30%			
RESIDENTIAL MIX				
Single family large lot:	Single family small lot:	Townhome:	Multi- Family	
0%	0%	0%	100%	
EMPLOYMENT MIX				
Retail:	Office:	Industrial:	Other:	
38%	18%	0%	45%	

# TABLE: LARGE LOT RESIDENTIAL AREA CATEGORY: RESIDENTIAL

DENSITY			
	Gross	Net	
Residential:	2.6 DU/Ac	3.0 DU/Ac	
Employment:	0.8 Emp/Ac	0.9 Emp/Ac	
LAND USE INFORMATION			
Parcel Area:	Streets, Parks	, Clvic Area:	
85%	15%		
RESIDENTIAL MIX			
Single family large lot:	Single family small lot:	Townhome:	Multi- Family
100%	0%	0%	0%
EMPLOYMENT MIX			
Retail:	Office:	Industrial:	Other:
14%	0%	0%	85%

# SOUTH HAMTRAMCK SUBAREA PLAN

The figure to the right presents a conceptual configuration of the South Hamtramck Study Area which reflects the considerations outlined in this chapter. The following guidelines shaped the concept, and should be referenced as specific proposals are developed for the site.

#### 1. HOUSING IS A KEY LAND USE.

The Target Market Analysis presents detailed recommendations for the form and quantity of housing units that Hamtramck can support over the next five years. The concept accommodates 80% of the attached units described in the TMA, leaving the remaining 20% of attached units and all detached units to be integrated into the existing fabric of the community as redevelopment opportunities.

#### 2. ACCOMMODATE LAND-INTENSIVE USES.

Several uses called out in the master plan require large parcels, a rarity in this densely-built community. The study area provides such an opportunity, envisioned along the Hamtramck side of Conant Street. Most are intended to be as flexible as possible, but a hotel is specifically envisioned to support activities at the revitalized Veteran's Park and to fill a need for commercial lodging within the City limits.

# 3. USE ONSITE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AS A FEATURE.

The two created waterbodies shown on the plan serve to reduce the stormwater burden on the City's infrastructure; as a passive recreation feature to complement the active recreation activities in Veteran's Park; and as a visual and recreational amenity to the residential development.

#### 4. CONNECT THE SUBAREA TO VETERAN'S PARK.

Significant concurrent investment in a revitalized Veteran's Park on the other side of the rail line offers an opportunity for the two planning efforts to synergize. Providing a nonmotorized connection

between the two sites in the form of a tunnel beneath the rail line is an important connection that provides a pedestrian flow outside of the two vehicular underpasses at Campau and Conant, bringing better access to the subarea site. There is sufficient space to provide a parking lot to serve large gatherings held in Veteran's Park, further activating the subarea site while relieving congestion on the north side of the rail line.

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The data was collected from a range of sources including Census, Claritas updates, State sources and a detailed parcel by parcel survey conducted by the consultants. A digital GIS basemap was produced for this plan to act as a central repository of the parcel-level data.

In addition to the data collection, this analysis was generated through a lot of listening to the public, City employees, non-profit organizations and other stakeholders. Public meetings, focus group meetings, one-on-one interviews, surveys and a collaborative map provided insight into the City's main challenges and identified many of the barriers in moving forward.

The result of this process is a series of baseline indicators that measure the state of the City today. These indicators should be used to track progress as implementation activities move forward.

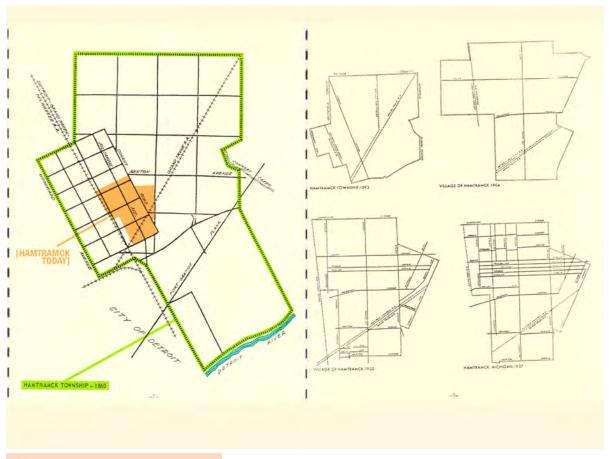
## **HISTORIC CONTEXT**

#### **Historic Context**

Hamtramck derives its name from Jean-François Hamtramck, a French-Canadian colonel in the Revolutionary War who took over Detroit after the British ceded control in 1796. Hamtramck became a township in 1798 and in the early days of its history covered an area far greater than its present day boundaries, reaching all the way to the Detroit River. In 1901, Hamtramck was established as a village and in the early 1900s it was largely settled by German-American farmers, numbering about 500.

The village was dramatically transformed by the establishment of the Dodge Brothers Motor Car Company plant and the growth of the automotive industry. The Dodge Brothers broke ground for their automotive plant in 1910 and began operations in 1914, attracting large numbers of European immigrants, particularly from Poland. The population swelled 1199% from 3,589 in 1910 to 46,615 in 1920. This was the greatest population increase in the United States at the time. The large influx of Polish immigrants gave Hamtramck a distinct character that endures today even as new immigrants from the Middle East and South Asia make it the most diverse city in Michigan. The city was incorporated in 1922 to prevent annexation by Detroit and Peter C. Jezewski was elected the first mayor.

The growth of the City in the 1920s brought the construction of two enduring historic structures: the Saint Francis Hospital, present-day City Hall, opened in 1927 as the Hamtramck Municipal Hospital, and St. Florian Church was built in 1928 to accommodate a growing parish.



**43.** Hamtramck historic morphology

The auto industry played a crucial role in Hamtramck's growth and continues to have an impact on the city. The Dodge Main plant was one of the largest factories in the world and a major employer, with peak employment of 40,000 during the Second World War and dwindling down to 5,000 by the time it was closed down in 1980. A year later the plant was demolished in one of the biggest demolitions jobs in the United States. The plant accounted for 25% of the City's tax revenue and supported complementary services and

businesses that catered to its employees. Dodge Main was historically significant as a fully integrated auto manufacturing and assembly complex akin to Ford's operations in Highland Park and River Rouge. Dodge Main also played a critical role in the Detroit labor movement and was the site of the largest sitdown strike in American history in 1937. In 1985, General Motors Corporation took over the Dodge Main site in a controversial move that involved razing homes and businesses in the Poletown neighborhood to build a 400-acre plant



that straddles Hamtramck and Detroit. The fortunes of the GM Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly plant rose and fell along with that of GM and other American car companies. After receiving government loans and declaring bankruptcy, GM was launched anew in July 2009. In its new incarnation, GM has paid back its loan and its outlook has been improving. The Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly plant currently produces the Buick Lucerne and Cadillac DTS, and recently received investment for facilities, machinery and equipment to build the Chevrolet Volt electric car and serve as a secondary site for the production of the Chevrolet Malibu.

In 2000, an emergency financial manager was appointed by the state. In 2005, voters ratified a new City Charter that replaced the Strong Mayor model of governance with a City Manager/Council model to stave off receivership, and the emergency financial manager resigned in 2007. The City in 2010 is facing potential state receivership as it weathers the global recession, continued shifts in the manufacturing industry, and severe revenue shortfall.

## PLANNING CONTEXT

The City's planning history has gone through various twists and turns. As in many cities, urban renewal and highway building in the 1950s and 1960s has left behind scars that are still being redressed. Declining population and a diminished tax base hurt the City in the 1970s as it struggled to maintain the same level services and ran a deficit that grew in the 1980s with the closing of the Dodge Main plant. The City has also undergone intervention from the State and a restructuring of its government with a new City Charter.

#### Redevelopment Era

Hamtramck began its urban renewal program in 1959. Three predominantly African-American neighborhoods were identified for clearance: Wyandotte, Denton-Miller and Grand Haven. The highway, built in the mid-1950s, was originally planned to go around the City, but instead was rerouted to cut through Grand Haven, contributing to its deterioration and eventual demolition through urban renewal. Denton-Miller, in the southeast section of the City, was slated for clearance to make way for industrial uses. The Wyandotte neighborhood is now the site of the Hamtramck Town Center Shopping Center and Senior Citizen Plaza.



#### Lawsuit and Restitution

A federal court ruling in 1971 found that the City had a deliberate strategy when it demolished homes in poor neighborhoods that resulted in the decrease of the black population of Hamtramck from 14.5% to 8.5% between 1960 and 1966. In 1980, the City agreed to build 200 family housing units and 150 senior housing units that would be subsidized for the plaintiffs in the lawsuit, or if they are no longer living, to their descendants. The Senior Citizen Plaza was completed in the 1980s; however, construction on the family housing was stalled due to disagreements and the City's lack of funds. In 1999, changes in city leadership and greater cooperation between local, state and federal agencies helped moved the process along. Improvements to the Grand Haven neighborhood have been made with rehabilitation and new construction. Approximately half the family homes have been built, and the remainder of the housing is expected to be completed by 2011 with federal stimulus funds.

The lawsuit, known as the R31 lawsuit, is significant as it is one of the longest-running housing discrimination suits in the history of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and one of the rare class-action suits made on behalf of blacks who suffered housing discrimination in the mid-1900s. The impact of the lawsuit, stretching over the duration of 40 years, was widely felt as the City lost much of its federal funding and development stalled for decades.

#### Restructuring Of City Government

The City's financial distress led the State to appoint an emergency financial manager in 2000, making it the first municipality in Michigan to undergo such a process. Technically, Hamtramck was never in receivership as the 2005 ratification of a new city charter prevented it. The new charter replaced the strong mayor model with a city manager/council system. City council, made up of 6 council members all at large, is charged with making policy and ordinances and sets the general direction, while the city manager is the tool for implementation. The mayor cannot introduce legislation, but is able to cast a tie-breaking vote on ordinances.

#### **Budget Constraints Today**

Hamtramck's financial situation has worsened, along with the nation, as the recession continues to reduce revenues. Over the next two years, revenues are anticipated to drop \$1.6 million and \$1.9 million, not including the 80% tax reduction the City filed for. Even if the City receives a 40% reduction, the "lights would flicker in City Hall." Adding to the gravity of the situation is an ongoing dispute with Detroit over revenue from the GM Assembly Plant. According a revenue-sharing scheme, Detroit has been providing about \$1.7 million annually, but now claims the arrangement expired in 1996 and that Hamtramck owes Detroit overpaid dollars. Detroit's withholding of these funds has significantly worsened Hamtramck's financial position.

A main source of the City's distress is the burden of Legacy costs which take up half of the City's budget. Every year, more money is used to cover pension costs than goes to pay salaries. These pension constraints combined with the current economic climate have stressed the City's funds to the point where some positions have had to be reduced or eliminated. The privatization of City's services has helped to remedy this situation by enabling the City's pension obligation to decrease over time.

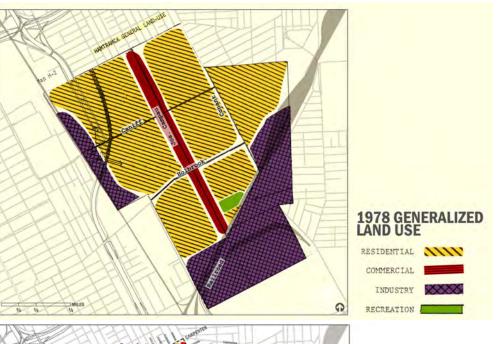
#### Last Master Plan

#### > 1999 City of Hamtramck Master Plan:

The plan consists of a Land Use Plan, Public Buildings Analysis, and Parks and Recreation Plan. The Master Plan builds off Hamtramck's advantages as a compact city with a sense of place and history that sets it apart. The Plan proposes reinforcing stable neighborhoods as urban residential villages; creating a vital downtown and forming a Downtown Property Management Authority to centralize maintenance; managing commercial redevelopment along corridors and industrial uses to be compatible with their surroundings, particular residential. The Parks and Recreation chapter of the Master Plan calls for the expansion of recreation opportunities through the expansion of existing facilities, including school grounds, the development of privately-owned and commercial recreation facilities, and the redevelopment of vacant or marginal buildings and land. Despite the work completed on this document, the 1999 Master Plan was never finished. The appointment of an emergency financial manager in 2000 stopped the planning process due to budget shortfalls.

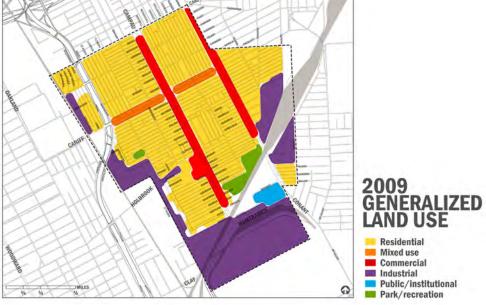
#### This Master Plan

In 2006, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority [MSHDA] identified 8 cities in the state with the highest poverty rates to be Cities of Promise, a 4-year program that is ending soon. The Cities of Promise program assembled resource teams to work directly with each city. Developing a Master Plan for Hamtramck was among the Cities of Promise action plan elements and MSHDA provided funding to help pay for the plan. The purpose of the plan, in addition to helping guide the City in its economic development goals, is to integrate general findings and themes from the previous 2003 open space plan and the more recent arts and cultural framework plan.



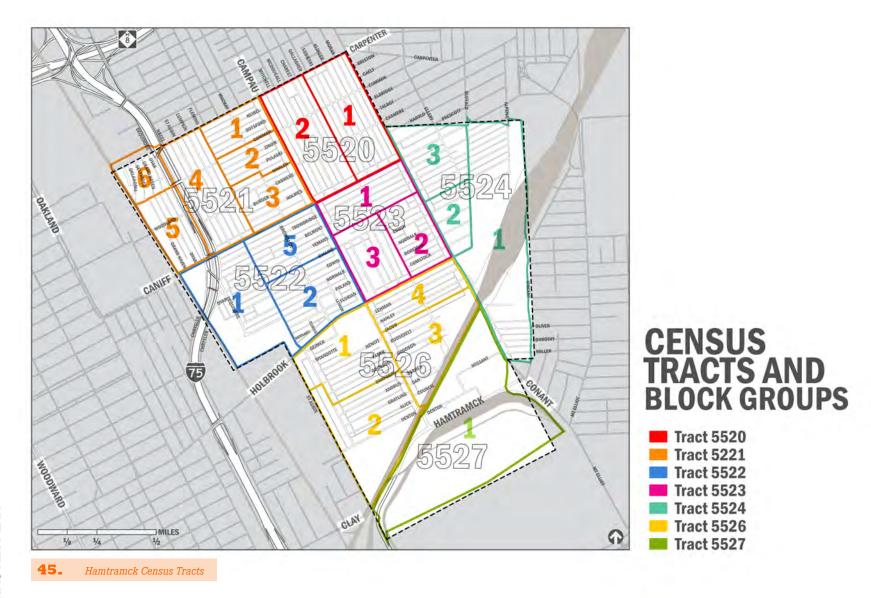
#### Change In Land Use Over Time

The generalized land use map from 1978 shows that most of the city was residential in character, much like today. Large industrial parcels were clustered along the rail systems that cut through the city on the western and southern sides. The main commercial corridor for the City was Joseph Campau. In comparison, the generalized land use map for 2009 depicts growth of the commercial corridors to Conant and Caniff as well as Campau. The large industrial parcels have been broken up and, as the white spaces show, vacancy has replaced some of the industrial land and adjacent housing. The new land use map also shows the addition of the correctional facility south of the rail corridor, the new shopping center at Holbrook and Campau, and new park space near the American Axle property on the west side of the City.



Kids try out the playscape at Carpenter playground in 1960. This was the site of the old Carpenter School, which was torn down in the early 1940s. The lot is now occupied by a parking structure. Photo: Hamtramck Heritage Collection.

**44.** Change in land use over time

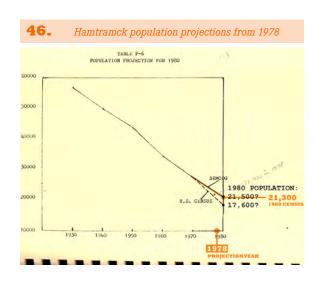


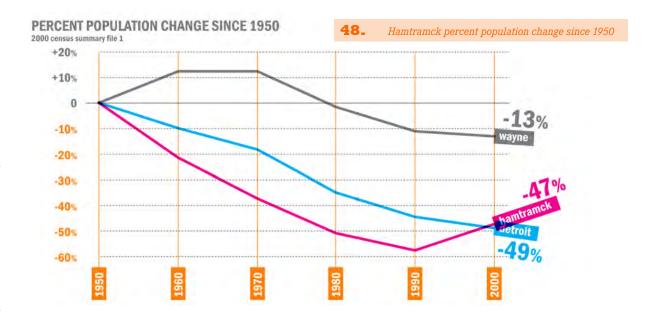
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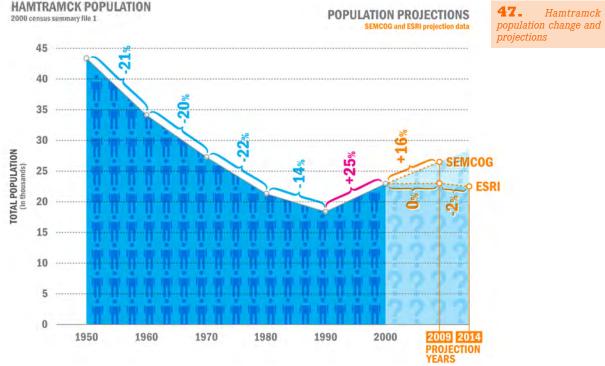
# **DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

#### **Population Change**

According to the U.S. census [blocks in Hamtramck shown on previous page] the 2000 population was 22,976. The Southeastern Council of Governments, SEMCOG, estimates that the 2009 population of Hamtramck is 26,556, a 15.6% increase from 2000, while the ESRI population projects are much more modest, anticipating a 2% loss from 2000-2014. [The ESRI prediction puts the 2009 population at 22,996 and the 2014 population at 22,446.] After decades of decline from the mid-twentieth century, the population grew 25% between 1990 and 2000. Over the course of the 50 years between 1950 and 2000, Hamtramck's population declined a total of 47%, slightly less than Detroit's 49%, but worsthan the 13% decline experienced by Wayne Count over the same period.



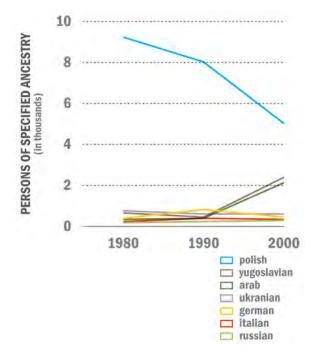


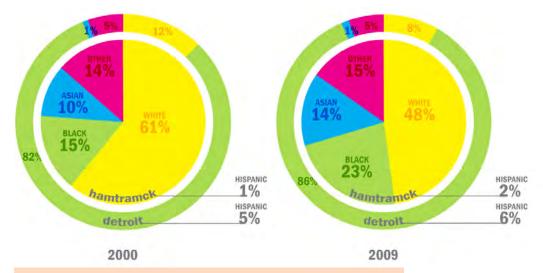


#### Race and Ethnicity

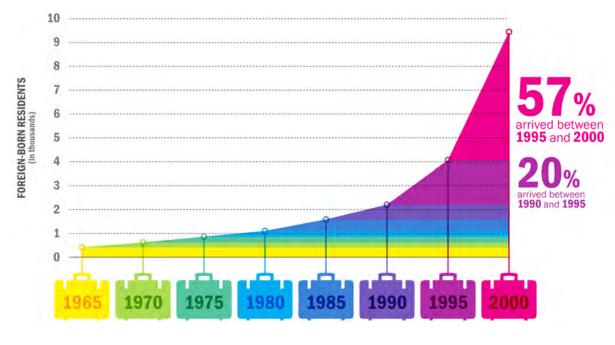
The racial composition of Hamtramck differs sharply with that of Detroit. Whereas Detroit's population is majority African-American [82% and 86% in 2000 and 2009 respectively], Hamtramck's is far more diverse. The white population made up 61% of the total population in 2000, but shrank to 48% by 2009, as the Asian and African-American population grew. This change in racial composition illustrates the immigration trends in Hamtramck over the last 20 years. Not only is Hamtramck incredibly diverse, it is not as spatially segregated as many cities:

"IN A WAY WE ARE SUCCESSFUL IN THAT SENSE. IF YOU LIVE IN A BIGGER CITY THERE ARE MORE ETHNIC COMMUNITIES BUT THEY'RE SEGREGATED. BECAUSE WE'RE SWALL, IT FORCES US TO LIVE SIPE BY SIPE. THIS IS UNIQUE THAT SHOULD BE AN EXAMPLE FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTRY."





**50.** Hamtramck Race and Ethnicity. Source: 2000 Census Summary File 3



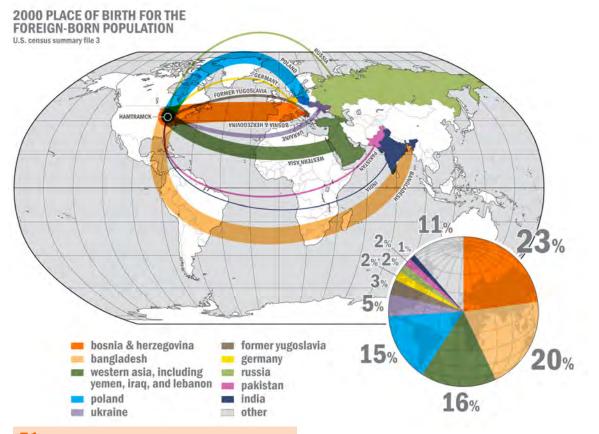
**49.** Year Of Entry for Hamtramck's Foreign-Born Residents in 2000. Source: 2000 Census Summary File 3

#### **Immigration and Ancestry**

Hamtramck has evolved from an overwhelmingly Polish town to one of the most international and diverse cities in Michigan. 40 years ago, Hamtramck was 90% Polish but over the past thirty years, a large number of immigrants from the Middle East [especially Yemen] and South Asia [especially Bangladesh] have moved to the city. As of the 2000 census, the City's foreign born population stood at 41.1%, with 20% arriving between 1990 and 1995 and increasing to 57% arriving between 1995 and 2000. While Poland was the place of birth of the majority of foreign-born residents up until the 1970s and 1980s, by the 2000 census, the greatest percentage of the foreign-born population were coming from Bosnia-Herzegovina [23%], Bangladesh [20%], and Western Asia [16%].

Although residents of Polish ancestry remain the largest descent group in Hamtramck, the city lost 46% of its residents with Polish ancestry between 1980 and 2000. Over the same period. Hamtramck saw residents of Arab descent increase six-fold while residents from the former Yugoslavia nearly quadrupled. Albanians were also a significant presence in the City 20 years ago but have mainly passed through and are now in the suburbs. Many in the Bangladeshi community arrived in Hamtramck from Queens in New York, their original gateway city, starting in the mid-1990s. Affordable housing, factory jobs, and word of mouth were strong incentives to leave New York behind, and now Hamtramck, not New York, has become the gateway for new Bangladeshi immigrants.

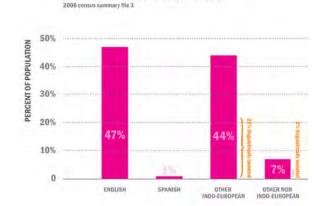
The cultural and ethnic diversity of Hamtramck is also represented linguistically. Less than half of the City's households spoke English as their primary language in 2000. Other Indo-European languages accounted for the primary language in 44% of the households, and almost half of these households were considered linguistically isolated,



**51.** Place of Birth for the foreign-born population. Source: 2000 Census Summary File 3

where all members of the household over 14 years of age have some difficulty with English. Non Indo-European languages were the primary language for 7% of the households. Language barriers have been cited as one of the main difficulties in bridging the gap between different communities. But despite the barriers of language and occasional cultural friction, a sense of neighborhood friendliness is still cultivated:

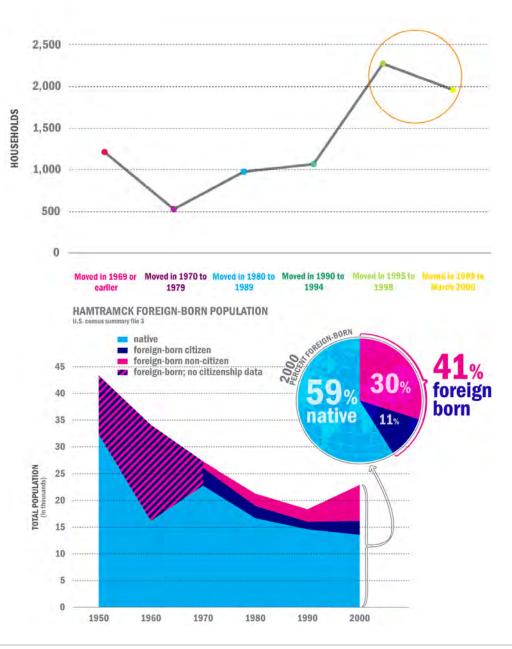
**M**TO ME IT'S REALLY AN INTERNATIONAL VILLAGE — THE CONNECTIONS FROM HAMTRAMCK ARE JUST SO BROAD.**!!** 



HAMTRAMCK HOUSEHOLD LANGUAGE

#### HAMTRAMCK LENGTH OF RESIDENCY

2000 census summary file 3



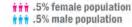
#### Length Of Residency

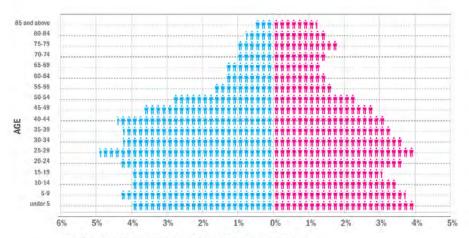
Hamtramck has served as a gateway city for various waves of new immigrants over the years. Over half of the City's households in 2000 moved to Hamtramck between 1995 and 2000. Hamtramck also has a solid population of lifetime residents and families who have lived here for generations. Over time, however, many of the new residents move away as soon as they can afford to live somewhere else. This residential leakage points to the City's struggle to retain new residents over the long-term. According to interviews, the poor economy and quality of the school system have furthered the movement of new residents out of Hamtramck.

The upside of this phenomenon of out-migration is that there is a strong Hamtramck diaspora; there are people all over the country who once lived in Hamtramck or have family who used to live there [or still do] and there is a tremendous amount of fraternity among those who are familiar with it.

LE CAN'T TALK TO MY NEIGHBOR AND SHE CAN'T TALK TO ME! WE JUST WAVE. !!

53% of households moved in between 1995 and 2000 2000 census summary file 1





#### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME 1999-2014

2000 census summary file 1, 2009 ESRI projection



#### Age, Sex and Income

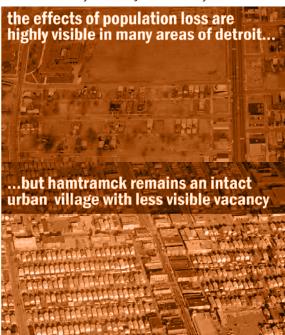
According to the Census, a little less than a third of the City's population is below the age of 19 which reflects the concerns of many about local youth, the schools and supporting programs. Since this data is from the last available Census in 2000, the number of children now living in Hamtramck is likely higher. At the other end of the age spectrum, there are far more older females than males. As illustrated in the age pyramid, there is a large bulge of males in the City between the ages of 20 and 50. This is likely due to the Wayne County prison whose inmates are male.

Median households in Hamtramck are lower than both Wayne County and the City of Detroit at \$36,246. 27% of the City's population lives below the poverty line. Combined with the language and cultural difficulties facing many of the City's foreign born population, addressing this poverty rate will be a significant challenge for the City and their partners moving forward.

# **PHYSICAL CONTEXT**

#### **Municipal Context**

Hamtramck occupies 2.1 square miles within Detroit. It is located off of I-75 and within easy access to I-94 and the Detroit Metropolitan Airport. The northwestern tip of the City abuts the incorporated city of Highland Park. Hamtramck is not far from the activity centers of Detroit, including downtown, Wayne State University, the College for Creative Studies, and the Eastern Market. For those who call Hamtramck home, the combination of its dense urban quality, small-town solidarity, and international diversity set it apart. It has a "small-town feel right outside of a major urban city" and "in the Detroit metro area, you don't get much more urban than Hamtramck." It is denser than Detroit, and on a par with the density of a major urban city.



MITHIS IS THE MOST URBAN FORMAT OF ANYWHERE IN THE REGION. THERE IS SUCH A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY HERE THAT IS DEFINITELY PROLIFERATED BY THE LAND USE AND DENSITY, WHICH IS SO UNIQUE FOR THIS REGION. ??



Municipal Context. Source: Interface Studio





# FIGURE/ GROUND

Building footprints

# URBAN FABRIC DISCONTINUITY

- Rail corridors
- Grade-separated highways
   Industrial fabric
- Blocks containing at least 50% vacant land

## Edge Conditions and Urban Fabric

While Hamtramck has a tight urban fabric, especially when compared to Detroit, clear ruptures and discontinuities can be seen in the figure-ground map. The building footprints are represented in black and white spaces indicate streets, parking lots and unbuilt land. The City appears most intact in the core quadrants around the intersection of Campau and Caniff. Further out from this core

and closer to the boundaries with Detroit, the blocks of houses become less clearly delineated and the pattern changes to higher proportions of white space and bigger industrial footprints. The abrupt changes in character and greater levels of vacancy create internal divisions among the different neighborhoods in the City; a result of the balkanizing effects of the edge conditions of

high vacancy, industrial complexes, and physical barriers such as the highway and rail corridor that cut through the City.

## **LAND USE & ZONING**

#### Methodology

A windshield survey of land use [including commercial subtypes and institutional subtypes], vacancy, and building condition, was conducted in September 2009, recording parcel-specific data for every parcel in the City of Hamtramck. The parcel shapefile provided to the master planning team was incomplete at the time of the beginning of the survey; therefore, parcels on the east side of town are approximate shapes.

#### Land Use

Overall, the land use map shows the City is predominantly residential in character with commercial corridors along Campau, Conant and Caniff, and strong edges in the form of large-parcel industrial uses and transportation infrastructure. Institutional uses are spread throughout the City, but public park space is limited and located entirely in the southern half of the City far from many neighborhoods.

The City can roughly be divided into four quadrants along Holbrook and Campau with a dramatic change in character south of Holbrook. North of Holbrook, the City is dense, compact and mainly residential, while south of Holbrook, the urban fabric is disrupted with the suburban-style shopping center, high levels of vacancy, the rail corridor, and large industrial parcels which take up about half the land area. There are also more multi-family residential units south of Holbrook.

The adjacency of industrial and residential uses has produced several undesirable consequences, including high levels of vacancy and dangerous conditions for residents. Last year a fire at Sterling Oil forced the evacuation of hundreds of residents at Colonel Hamtramck Homes and Grand Haven.

Land use categorized as:

#### > SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

housing units composed of one-family dwelling units

#### > MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

housing units composed of dwelling units for two or more families

#### > MIXED USE

parcels with more than one use, a common type being ground-floor retail with residential units on the upper floors

#### > COMMERCIAL

retail, offices, services, restaurants, bars

#### > INDUSTRIAL

manufacturing, assembly, distribution, warehouse

#### > PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL

government, schools, churches

#### > PARK/RECREATION

parks, community centers

#### > YARD

privately-owned and maintained parcels adjacent to residential parcels

#### > UTILITY/INFRASTRUCTURE

transportation, public works, utility

#### > PARKING

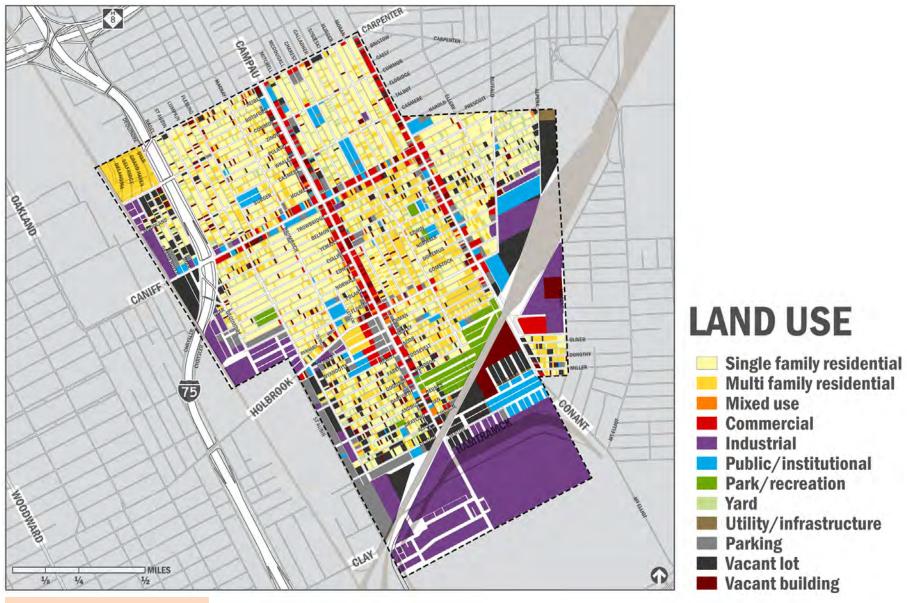
parking lots, garages

#### > VACANT LOT

undeveloped land with no apparent use

#### > VACANT BUILDING

unoccupied structures with no apparent use



2009 Land Use. Source: Interface Studio

#### Vacancy

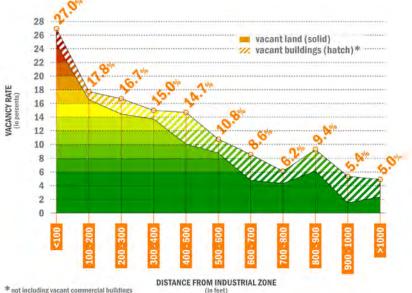
Vacancy in the City is broken into vacant buildings and vacant land. Overall, 13% of the City's parcel area is vacant. Parcels with vacant buildings comprised 4% of the City's total parcelized area and are distributed throughout the City. In a straight count of parcels with surveyed buildings [not including industrial uses; secondary structures on residential lots and in residential yards, such as garages and storage sheds; and utility/infrastructure buildings], 5% of built parcels appeared to have vacant buildings.

Vacant land parcels are more numerous and are more concentrated at the edges of the City where industrial uses and infrastructure are located. The largest parcels of vacant land are situated along the rail corridor and the highway. The vacancy rate of parcels located within 100 feet of industrial uses is 27%, most of it in the form of vacant land. Vacancy rates decrease as the distance from industrial uses increases, and the difference between the amount of vacant land and vacant buildings narrows.

Vacancy is likely underrepresented in the recorded industrial land use data, as many industrial buildings were observed to have minimal evidence of use, but, given the nature of the variable use patterns of warehousing and similar uses, they were assumed to be in use unless the physical condition of the building was such that their total abandonment was obvious. The vacancy rate for industrial-zoned areas is 14% for vacant land and 5% for vacant buildings.

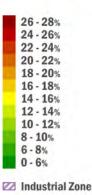
City-owned lots also account for a substantial number of the vacant land in Hamtramck. This land cannot be disposed until the requirements of the R31 lawsuit are fulfilled. A Weed and Seed program trains 12 homeless workers to help clean and green 400 city-owned lots. The project is in partnership with MSHDA who have helped in construction and greening.





# VACANCY RATE BY DISTANCE FROM INDUSTRIAL ZONE

and and building vacancy rates totaled; excludes commercial vacancy



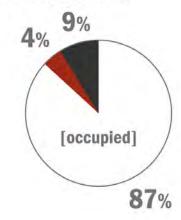
2009 Vacancy Rate by Distance from Industrial Zone.
Source: Interface Studio



# **VACANCY**



## VACANCY RATE BY PARCEL AREA



> there are 337 parcels with VACANT BUILDINGS

> there are 706 parcels with VACANT LAND, comprising 81.75 ACRES

2009 Vacancy. Source: Interface Studio

#### Zoning

Hamtramck simplified the zoning categories and remapped the City in 2003. The zoning and land uses are closely aligned. The commercial corridors are clearly marked as Commercial zones, and most of the city is zoned Residential, with the Colonel Hamtramck Homes and Senior Plaza zoned Residential Multiple. The industrial-zoned land is underutilized, however, as it hosts the largest vacancies, especially along the rail corridor.



# **ZONING**

R: residential

RM: residential multiple

C2: commercial

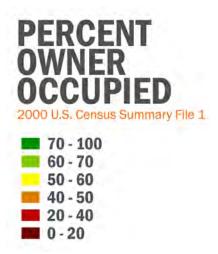
CBD: central business district

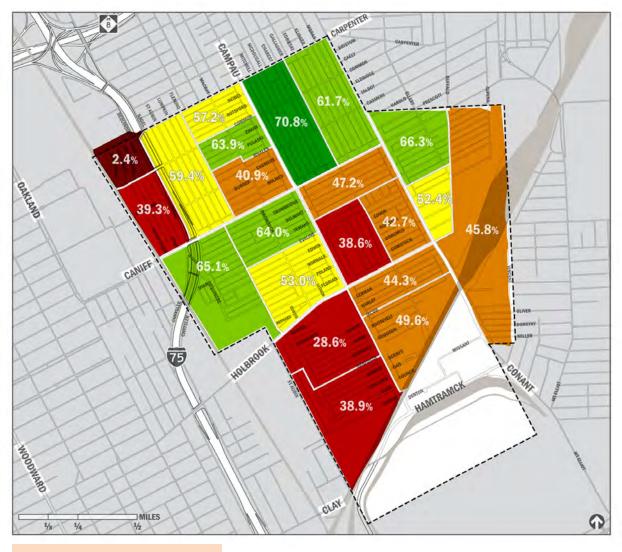
I: industrial

# **HOUSING**

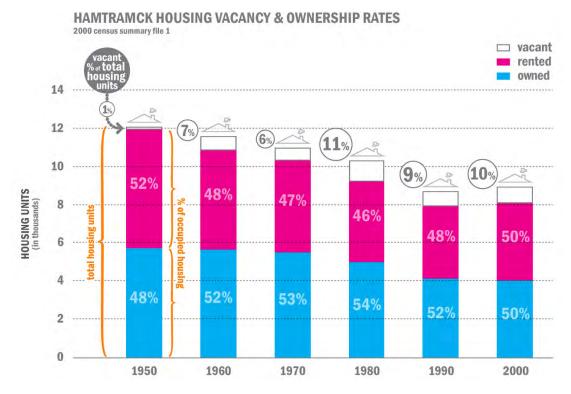
#### Vacancy and Tenure Trends

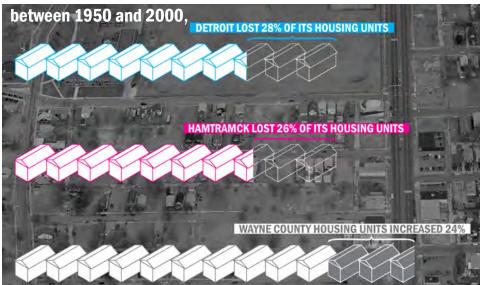
Over the last 50 years, the homeownership rates in Hamtramck have held fairly stable, rising from 48% in 1950 to a peak of 54% in 1980 before dipping to 50% in 2000. The highest levels of homeownership in 2000 were found northeast and southwest of the intersection of Campau and Caniff. Homeownership rates drop west of the highway, south of Holbrook and southeast of Campau and Caniff. The lowest levels of homeownership were found west of the highway in an area that is cut of from the rest of the City, the southeastern most block group that runs along the rail corridor, and the block groups southwest and northeast of Holbrook and Campau. These areas were targeted for urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s and/or suffer from undesirable edge conditions that contribute to high levels of vacancy. The public housing development Colonel Hamtramck Homes accounts for the census block group with the lowest rate of homeownership.





2009 Zoning. Source: City of Hamtramck.





Over the same period from 1950 to 2000, the rate of vacancy rose from 1% to 10%, and the total number of housing units fell by 26% from over 12,000 units to 8,894. This reduction in the number of housing units and rise in vacant units corresponds to the decline of the population and the demolition of some housing stock that has not been replaced.

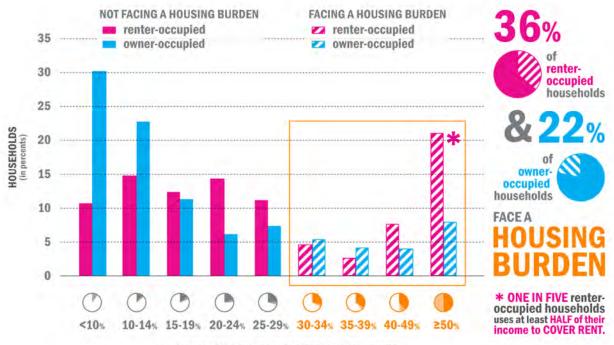
#### **Affordability**

One of the reasons new residents choose to settle in Hamtramck is that it is more affordable than comparable cities. While affordability is seen as an asset by some, 36% of renters and 22% of homeowners face a housing burden whereby they are spending over 30% of their income on housing costs. One in five renters faces severe housing burdens, using at least half of their income for housing costs. The State property tax laws also pose a number of challenges to families. Under Proposition A, property taxes are limited to the lesser rate of inflation or 5%, and for owners who purchased their homes before 1996, assessed value was capped. After 1996, there is no cap. The goal was to encourage owners to hold and improve their properties as a property owned for a long time would owe less property tax than an identical property that had been recently



#### PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME USED FOR HOUSING COSTS

2000 census summary file 3



% of HOUSEHOLD INCOME USED FOR HOUSING COSTS

Percent of Household Income Used For Housing Costs. Source: 2000 Census Summary File 3.

transferred. This plan was targeted to senior citizens to keep them from leaving the City. On average, older, higher income homeowners have benefitted at the expense of younger, lower income homeowners, and some families have been forced out of the market. Homelessness is not a big issue in Hamtramck because communities, especially new immigrants, tend to take care of their own family members. However, overcrowded housing is an issue, indicating a potential need demand for housing in the future.

#### **Public Housing**

The Hamtramck Housing Commission owns and operates the City's public housing, and serves about 750–1000 low income and disabled residents in Hamtramck. Their mission is to provide housing for those with incomes 20% below the median. The Hamtramck Housing Commission is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest housing commission in the State by capital funds appropriated by HUD, and it is the largest ranked as a high performer. It operates two public housing properties:

> Senior Plaza: 150 units for seniors and disabled in the high rises off of Holbrook behind the strip

mall, where the waiting list is six months.

> Colonel Hamtramck Homes: 300 low income units at the corner of Commor and Dequindre, which were built in 1936. The wait list is 3-5 years.

Today, Hamtramck's public housing is in extremely solid shape — Colonel Hamtramck Homes is now a HUD high performer — but this was not always the case. HUD designated the Hamtramck Housing Commission a "troubled agency" and took it over a few years ago. When HUD transferred the operation back into the hands of the city agency, Kevin Kondrat and Chris Cornwall took the agency from troubled to HUD high performer in a very short period of time. The Housing Commission's high performance standard makes it eligible to apply for additional funding. Currently in the process of receiving energy/greening grants awarded to improve housing, reduce operating costs.

The legacy of the housing discrimination lawsuit from 40 years ago continues to affect the disposition of public land in Hamtramck. Until the City provides the required units to the residents displaced by urban renewal or their descendants, they are not allowed to do anything with city-owned land, including sell it. The senior plaza was built to satisfy 150 units of the settlement and infill development on city lots has slowly produced more units over the years. In 2010, the City has put together the funding required to finish the final 104 units in fulfillment of the settlement. Neighborhood Stabilization Funds [NSP 1] and HUD HOME funds will be used to acquire and rehabilitate 30 scattered site units; state funds, through MSHDA, will be used to rehabilitate and build 35 homes; and NSP 2 funds will be used for the last 39 units of affordable housing. In addition, new properties built on city properties have up to 50% tax abatement for 15 years. After the requirements of the lawsuit are completed, the City plans to dispose of the remaining 200 cityowned vacant lots to developers.

# **COMMERCIAL SERVICES**

#### **Commercial Services**

There are approximately 500 business licenses in Hamtramck. The application process for a license involves filling out an application, be up to date on all utility payments, undergoing inspection and getting approval. The process takes about 1 to 3 weeks. Services and retail make up the bulk of commercial subtypes in Hamtramck. Retail uses are concentrated mainly on Campau between Caniff and Holbrook, which offers the most solid stretch of commercial activity. Food-related businesses are also well-represented, including restaurants and markets, with a wide variety of offerings from Polish to Yemeni to Indian. The number of small markets and grocery stores in Hamtramck is exceptional in the Detroit area, which is often referred to as a "food desert." There is no major grocery chain in the City of Detroit except for one Kroger, whereas in Grosse Point there are 5 Krogers.

In interviews, Hamtramck was often cited as the only town in Detroit with viable commercial main streets. Over the last 5 years, however, commercial vacancy has worsened in step with the Michigan economy. At the time of the survey, 20% of the business properties were vacant. All of the commercial streets in the City suffer from some vacancy. Ferndale, Royal Oak and Bloomfield are all competing for the traditional urban commercial market and are ahead of Hamtramck. At the same time, new businesses have been opening in the City, particularly along the emerging commercial corridors of Conant and Caniff. Newer business owners tend to live in Hamtramck, while older business owners have largely moved out of the area but have retained their business in Hamtramck.

#### > COMMERCIAL SUBTYPES

**RETAIL** pharmacies, stores carrying non-food items such as clothing, shoes, and accessories, electronics, and media

AUTO auto-related enterprises including car washes, auto repair, new and used car sales, gas stations

**SERVICES** skilled trades for hire including beauty salons, travel agencies, electrical service and repair, computer service and repair, plumbing, signs & banners, language translation services, heating, venting and air-conditioning sales, service, and repair, driving schools, locksmiths and key-copying, tax preparation services

**OFFICE** professional business offices including law offices, insurance, real estate, corporate or other business operations, newspaper and publishing

**MED OFFICE** medical treatment facilities and administrative locations

**FOOD** specialty food preparation and sales such as bakeries, butchers.

**MARKET** general food stores including grocery stores and markets

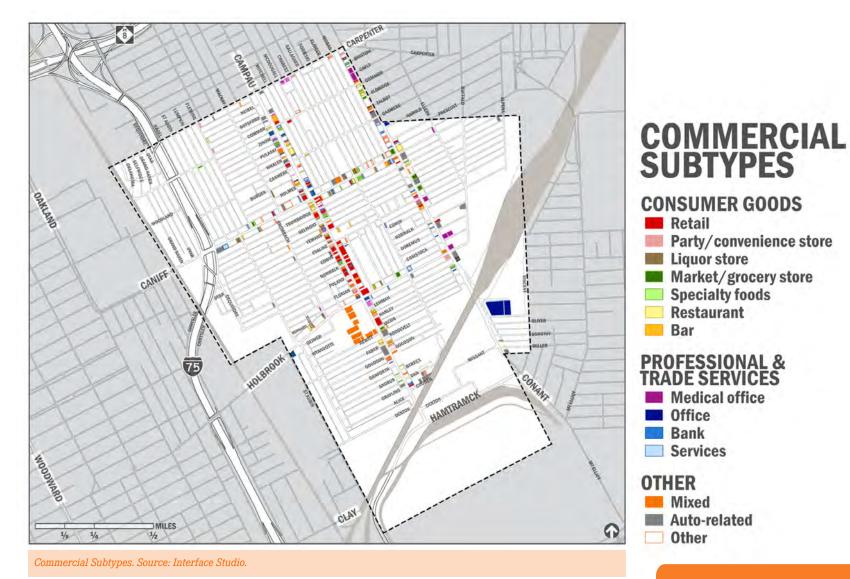
LIQUOR/PARTY STORE combination of liquor, convenience store, lotto, check cashing

**RESTAURANTS** fast food, eat-in or take-out restaurants

**BAR** bar & nightlife entertainment establishment

**OTHER** video and furniture rental, funeral homes, movie theaters, laundry mats, pawn shops, banquet halls and event spaces, medical equipment supply, art galleries

MENOUGH WITH THE PARTY STORES ALREADY!! 17



LETHE PAST YEAR ON AVERAGE THE CITY HAS SEEN 7-10 NEW BUSINESSES OPEN EACH MONTH. AT THE SAME TIME WE ARE SAPPENED TO SEE THE PEPARTURE OF SOME LONG-STANDING HAMTRAMCK INSTITUTIONS. 77



#### Commercial Vacancy. Source: Interface Studio.

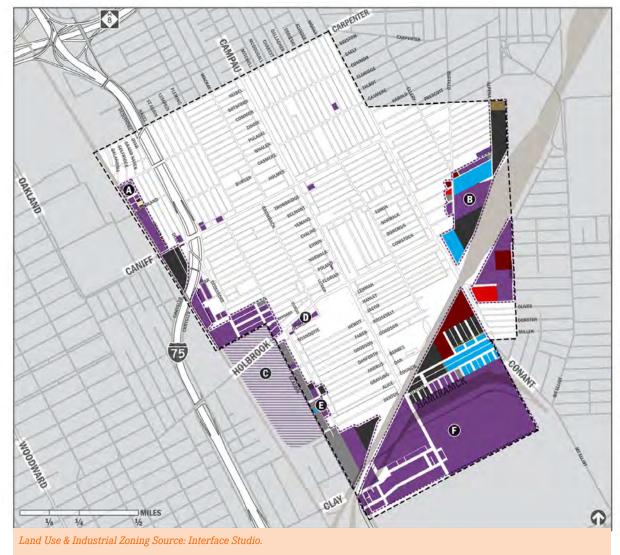
#### Commercial Vacancies

Commercial vacancies are scattered along the City's commercial corridors including Campau, Conant, Caniff and Holbrook. The largest concentration of commercial vacancies are located in downtown along Campau. This is due to a couple of factors. The Shoppers World site occupies an entire block downtown and is vacant which has negative impacts on surrounding uses. In addition, there are a few properties currently vacant that are in the pipeline for new uses. Finally, some of the commercial vacancies on Campau are well maintained spaces but the owner is looking for higher rents than stroes are willing to pay at this time.

# COMMERCIAL VACANCY

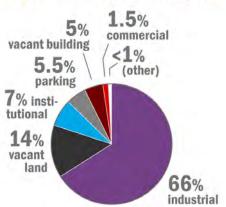
Active businesses

Vacant commercial buildings



# LAND USES & INDUSTRIAL ZONING

Land use within industrial zones by area



### Industrial zoning boundaries

#### Major local industrial uses

- (A) STERLING OIL & CHEMICAL
- B BAY LOGISTICS
- C) AMERICAN AXLE & MFG.
- D) KOWALSKI SAUSAGE CO.
- (E) METROPOLITAN BAKING CO.
- F GENERAL MOTORS DETROIT-HAMTRAMCK ASSEMBLY

# **LOCAL INDUSTRIES**

MHAMTRAMCK HAS ALWAYS BEEN A LUNCHTOWN.II

# Industrial Uses

The slow but dramatic disappearance of local industrial jobs has been a significant factor in the concurrent disappearance of local shops and restaurants—people who used to work at American Axle or the GM plant made up significant lunchtime business for Hamtramck's restaurants.

The last few years have been especially difficult as the national recession has gripped the entire State of Michigan and largest industries in Hamtramck have undergone enormous shifts. As a result the City is facing serious financial repercussions and risks being placed in state receivership.





#### General Motors Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly Plant

Built on the site of the former Dodge Main plant in 1985, the GM plant straddles Hamtramck and Detroit. Its construction was contentious as it required the demolition of the Poletown neighborhood of Detroit, which was acquired through eminent domain. The GM plant was used for the production of Buick, Oldsmobile, and Cadillac products. The plant currently employs over 1,000 people and produces the Cadillac DTS and Buick Lucerne large sedans. It recently received the contract to build the Chevrolet Volt rechargeable electric car and GM announced it would be investing \$336 million in the plant. The plant has been an important source of tax revenues for Hamtramck through a revenue-sharing agreement with Detroit, supplying at least \$1.7 million per year. However, Detroit is now withholding payment claiming that the agreement had expired in 2006 and that it may have overpaid. As of July 2010, an audit was underway, but the dispute over the agreement, described as a "potential death blow," threatens to put Hamtramck into receivership.

### Sterling Oil & Chemical

A petroleum facility has existed at the site since the 1930s originally as Gulf. Sterling blends, warehouses and distributes industrial lubricants to the automotive and related industries. The Hamtramck facility is over 5 acres and has a total storage capacity of almost 5 million gallons consisting of 45 above ground tanks, and two labs, one for gasoline and one for other products. The company does not own most of the products on site and is becoming more service oriented to support customers' product needs. Sterling is interested in different product lines and has submitted a grant to the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth to look at new manufacturing processes, potentially blending for different bio diesel blends using rape seed and soy methalester for testing and certifying new engines.

The company plans over the next 5 to 10 years to expand their operations. If space became available in Hamtramck, they would be interested in moving their truck storage [currently at a facility in Royal Oak] so that everything would be under one roof, but would need about 4,000 sq. ft. They are interested in acquiring property all the way down to Caniff and extend the rail sidings, which are vital to their operation as it provides large savings in transportation costs. However, these plans are at odds with the City's housing goals for the area and the fire in August 2009 has raised serious safety issues.

#### American Axle

The Chevrolet Gear and Axle plant opened in the 1920s, and eventually became American Axle. The plant is situated in both Hamtramck and Detroit, and is the company's largest plant. The company was long affiliated with GM, mainly producing axles for GM pickup trucks, but was spun off in 1994. The company's complex is exceptionally well maintained as is the surrounding neighborhood, one of the few instances of compatible residential/industrial adjacencies. However, the company is now nearing bankruptcy. In 2009, the company announced it was moving production to Mexico and laid off most of its workers after failing to negotiate pay cuts with the United Auto Workers [UAW] union. Workers had already agreed to steep pay cuts in 2008 after a three-month strike. In 2010, a labor arbitrator ruled that the company violated its contract with former UAW workers and may have to pay for lost wages or rehire the workers. With the shut down of production at the plant, the City has lost approximately \$500,000 a year in income tax revenue, plus property tax revenue.

## **INSTITUTIONAL USES**

#### Hamtramck Public Library

The Hamtramck Public Library was founded by the Tau Beta Association in 1918. The current library building was completed in 1956. The library is classified as a Class IV library based on the size of the population it serves. Among the 20 Class IV libraries in Michigan, Hamtramck's has the smallest budget. The 12,000 sq. ft. building houses 70,000 books, including a large foreign-language selection, a multimedia collection, a computer lab with broadband internet, video production and editing equipment, and the Hamtramck Heritage Collection of historic photographs that are being digitized for an online digital library. The library also runs programs that include author appearances funded by the Michigan Humanities Council, movie screenings, English as a Second Language classes, a language conversation partner program, after school tutoring, poetry programs, and other services.

The library is visited by about 500 people a day, many of them new immigrants. Library facilities are stretched to their limit, as lines are the norm for the use of the computers and programs are booked beyond capacity. After school programs at the library have attendance that exceeds their capacity, signifying both the need for additional after school activities for kids and the need for the expansion of the library, an idea which was heard frequently through various channels of public input during the throughout the planning process.

The library underwent major renovation in 2002 using block grant funding, and replaced the windows, lights and heating system. In 2003, a second millage was approved by Hamtramck

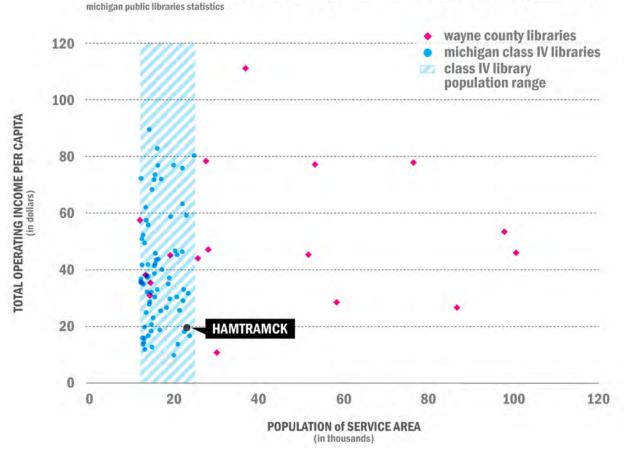
residents, making it independent from the City's finances. With an annual budget of \$150,000, \$50,000 to \$70,000 of which is spent on new books each year, the library is self-sufficient but does not have enough funding for landscaping or expansion.

#### Schools

All of Hamtramck falls within one school district, which includes one Preschool [pre K-K], three Elementary Schools [grades 1-6], one Middle

School [grades 7-8], one High School [grades 9-12], and one Alternative Education School [adult and GED, etc.], which are attended by approximately 2,900 students. The number of schools has increased in recent years, due to the addition of many charter schools in Hamtramck. Elementary school children are all bussed to school, but high school and middle school students walk. All of the schools in the district were accredited by the North Central Association in the 2008-2009 school year; however Hamtramck High School was given a State Accreditation Status of "D-Alert" and was the only

# LIBRARY OPERATING INCOME BY POPULATION OF SERVICE AREA, 2007-08



school that did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress standards for that school year.

The public school system is down 800 students from 5 years ago. The students have mainly been absorbed by the charter school system, which includes 5 Islamic charter schools. At present all of the charter schools only go to grade 9 so all students attend Hamtramck High School. A new charter high school is slated for the current parking structure and medical building complex on Carpenter. All of the school facilities are being used and the charter schools have helped to alleviate some of the space pressures. However, maintenance and upkeep are issues for the schools. Buildings are old and worn, but there is no money for capital improvements as it is all spent on programs and wages. Efforts to pass new millage to fund local school construction have not been successful.

MNO OTHER CITY IN THE COUNTRY SPEAKS 32 LANGUAGES IN THE SCHOOLS. 77

Schools also struggle with communication and retention where language is 90% of the issue. A 2001-2002 language breakdown in the schools showed that only 30% of the students spoke English, while 21% spoke Bengali/Bangla, 20% spoke Arabic and 15% spoke Serbo-Croatian/ Bosnian. Children are constantly coming from and going back to their native countries during the school year. School district estimates place the retention rate at about 60%. It is hard to account for the other 40%. According to school officials, some of the unaccounted for 40% drop out, others go back to their native country. Some students return to their native country temporarily and come back to school, but some do not return. A lot of students go overseas for up to a year and are called a dropout, therefore the distinction is difficult to

AT HOME AND CULTURES; CULTURE AT HOME AND CULTURE OUTSIDE. THESE KIDS ARE NOT STABLE. ??

make. Students struggling with the language and culture are at greater risk.

According to the superintendent of schools, Hamtramck elementary and middle schools are performing well, but high schools are struggling, with graduation rates below what they should be. In 2008, graduation rates for the school district were 10% below the state graduation rate of 76%.

The 2000 census shows a dropout rate of 21.3% among high school-aged youth. Figures for 2008, put the dropout rate for the district at 19%, with male students dropping out at twice the rate [25%] as female students [12%]. The subgroups with the highest dropout rate were black students at 33% and students with disabilities at 50%.

661 WOULD SAY THAT HAMTRAMCK'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS PERFORMING AT A B-MINUS LEVEL. MIPPLE SCHOOLS AT C AND HIGH SCHOOLS AT D. FAMILIES ARE LEAVING FOR BETTER SCHOOLS AND OTHER CITIES HAVE LOWER TAX RATES. 99

#### PUBLIC AND CHARTER HIGH SCHOOLS IN HAMTRAMCK:

HAMTRAMCK HIGH SCHOOL [Students: 1054; Location: 11410 CHAREST STREET; Grades: 9 - 12]
FRONTIER INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY SCHOOL [Students: 267; Location: 2619 FLORIAN STREET; Grades: 6 - 12]
HORIZON ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL [Students: 121; Location: 3225 CANIFF; Grades: 9 - 12]

#### PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOL IN HAMTRAMCK:

ST FLORIAN HIGH SCHOOL [Students: 123; Location: 2622 FLORIAN; Grades: 9 - 12]

#### PUBLIC AND CHARTER ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN HAMTRAMCK:

DICKINSON EAST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL [Students: 652; Location: 3385 NORWALK STREET; Grades: 1 - 6] BRIDGE ACADEMY SCHOOL [Students: 528; Location: 9600 BUFFALO; Grades: KG - 8] DICKINSON WEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL [Students: 503; Location: 2650 CANIFF STREET; Grades: 1 - 6] HANLEY INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY SCHOOL [Students: 493; Location: 2609 POLAND; Grades: KG - 7] HAMTRAMCK ACADEMY SCHOOL [Students: 469; Location: 11420 CONANT; Grades: KG - 8] KOSCIUSZKO SCHOOL [Students: 400; Location: 2333 BURGER STREET; Grades: 7 - 8] HOLBROOK SCHOOL [Students: 235; Location: 2361 ALICE AVENUE; Grades: 1 - 6] EARLY CHILDHOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL [Students: 194; Location: 11680 MCDOUGALL; Grades: KG - KG]

#### PRIVATE ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN HAMTRAMCK:

**OUR LADY QUEEN OF APOSTLES SCHOOL** [Students: 207; Location: 11420 CONANT AVENUE; Grades: K - 8] **ST FLORIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** [Students: 203; Location: 2622 FLORIAN; Grades: K - 8] **FRIENDSHIP HOUSE** [Students: 52; Location: 2031 CANIFO; Grades: PK - K]

### COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES WITH OVER 2000 STUDENTS NEAREST TO HAMTRAMCK:

MACOMB COMMUNITY COLLEGE [about 9 miles; WARREN, MI; Full-time enrollment: 11,057]

LAWRENCE TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY [about 10 miles; SOUTHFIELD, MI; FT enrollment: 2,479]

HENRY FORD COMMUNITY COLLEGE [about 12 miles; DEARBORN, MI; FT enrollment: 6,572]

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN [about 12 miles; DEARBORN, MI; FT enrollment: 5,574]

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY [about 12 miles; DETROIT, MI; FT enrollment: 20,389]

MARYGROVE COLLEGE [about 12 miles; DETROIT, MI; FT enrollment: 5,301]

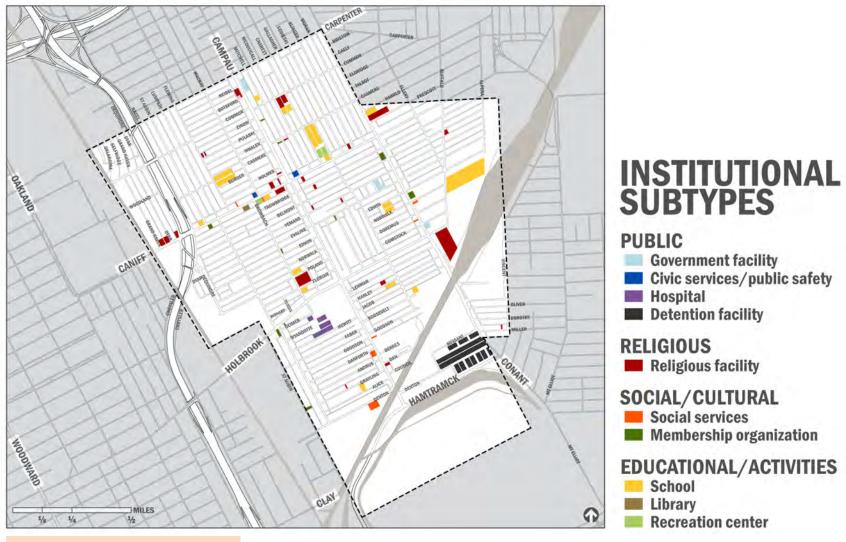
WAYNE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT [about 12 miles; DETROIT, MI; FT enrollment: 4,414]



Schools. Source: Interface Studio.

# **SCHOOLS**

- A EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER
- B EARLY CHILDHOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- (C) HAMTRAMCK ACADEMY
- D HAMTRAMCK HIGH SCHOOL
- (E) HORIZON HIGH SCHOOL
- F) BRIDGE ACADEMY
- G) KOSCIUSZKO MIDDLE SCHOOL
- H) DICKINSON WEST ELEMENTARY
- (I) DICKINSON EAST ELEMENTARY
- J FRIENDSHIP HOUSE MONTESSORI
- K FRONTIER INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL
- L HANLEY INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY
- (M) ST. FLORIAN ELEMENTARY
- N SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
- HOLBROOK ELEMENTARY
- P) FUTURE CHARTER SCHOOL



Institutional Subtypes. Source: Interface Studio.

#### **Community Service Providers**

The number of service providers in the City have decreased over the years. For a long time, services were not heavily used and eventually institutions such as St. Florian Parish, veterans' organizations, and the Rotary club disappeared. Today a new crop of service providers have emerged to serve the changing population and supplement the long-standing organizations.

#### ARAB AMERICAN AND CHALDEAN COUNCIL

Providing services in Hamtramck since 1981, the Detroit-based service provider has 40 centers, including two in Hamtramck. The Arab American and Chaldean Council [ACC] provides services to all city residents on public assistance with programs that include education, employment and training, behavioral health, youth recreation and self-enrichment, cultural activities, immigration and health services. The Hamtramck offices offer the Southeastern Michigan Community Alliance Job Education and Training [JET] program, Women Infants and Children [WIC] nutrition program, and human services in DHS offices, and ACC services at all location can be accessed through the Hamtramck offices.

# ARAB COMMUNITY CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Established in 1971 in Dearborn to help the Arab immigrant population, ACCESS now has seven locations and over 90 programs, serving a diverse population that extends beyond the Arab-American community. Its programs include health and human services, employment services, youth programs, educational and cultural programs, civic engagement, and social entrepreneurship. Its Hamtramck office is located in the Mayson Community Center.

#### **DETROIT FRIENDSHIP HOUSE**

Founded in 1929, the Detroit Friendship House is located in Hamtramck and serves the population of Hamtramck and Detroit. Among its services are

food, clothing, shelter and financial assistance. In 2009, over 2,000 households used the Harvest Food Pantry, \$40,000 was spend on non-food items, and \$90,000 was spend on utility, rent and mortgage assistance.

#### HAMTRAMCK UNITED SOCIAL SERVICES

Hamtramck United Social Services [HUSS] is an umbrella organization for Hamtramck service providers. The council meets monthly to share information, resources and provide training, encouraging strong social service partnerships in Hamtramck.

#### HAMTRAMCK COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

The Hamtramck Community Initiative [HCI] is a local non-profit created to administer Hamtramck's Weed and Seed program. The program is funded through the Department of Justice. The HCI coordinates with other agencies on community policing programs, crime prevention, neighborhood watch, neighborhood clean up projects, and youth programs.

#### **ISLAMIC CENTER OF HAMTRAMCK**

The Islamic Center of Hamtramck is a non-profit association that organizes religious, social, cultural and educational activities. The center runs an Islamic Weekend School to provide children with Islamic education.

#### PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY SERVICES

People's Community Services [PCS] was originally established as Dodge Community House in 1923 to provide services for Dodge Main employees. It eventually merged with other service organizations and evolved into People's Community Services, a non-sectarian service center. With service centers in Hamtramck and Southwest Detroit, PCS primarily serves the residents of Hamtramck, Highland Park and Southwest Detroit. The PCS owns the H. Irving Mayson Hamtramck Center, a multipurpose center that is used by other service agencies, such as the

Arab Community Center Economic and Social Services [ACCESS], the Hamtramck public school system, and the Wayne County Health Department for its WIC program. PCS administers youth and senior services, counseling, substance abuse prevention and treatment, and basic needs and emergency needs programs.

#### **PIAST INSTITUTE**

Founded in 2002, the National Institute for Polish and Polish American Affairs is a think tank and research center, as well as a United State Census Bureau Census Information Center. Piast organizes conferences, exhibits, seminars and publications; provides data for community groups; assists immigrants with visa, documentation and status issues; and promotes Polish and Polish-American culture.

#### **Programs**

#### YOUTH

- > Reading is Fundamental: PCS book distribution program that distributed 25,000 books to 7,000 kids last year.
- > Youth Stay in School Afterschool programs at Mayson Neighborhood Center: tutoring, computer lab, counseling, art program.
- > Targeted Assistance Program: an ACCESS after school program held at Bridge Academy and Frontier International Academy that offers tutoring in all subjects.
- > Healthy Kids nutrition education program offered by ACCESS.
- > Islamic Center Weekend School: Islamic education and stay in school program.
- > Hamtramck Drug Free Coalition: a Michigan Department of Education program with Piast that surveys students on drug and alcohol use. The survey covered public schools but not charter schools.
- > HCl youth violence prevention: the program started in 2008 and is funded through Weed and Seed with the goal of reaching out to youth and addressing violence and crime prevention.
- > H.O.P.E.: enrichment, recreation and academic programs offered through the Hamtramck Public School district.
- > Department of Recreation classes and summer programs

#### > WOMEN'S PROGRAMS

Project Fresh Start: a PCS drug rehabilitation program for women who are former prostitutes at the correctional facility.

#### **SENIOR SERVICES**

Services provided through PCS's Senior Day-Time Center:

- > Senior Day Care with volunteer nurses, activities
- > Homecare assistance [serves "metro-Hamtram-ck" area including Highland Park]: light housekeeping, personal care, chore services, etc.
- > Respite care & ambulatory service
- > Transportation for seniors
- > Focus Hope: commodity distribution through gift baskets
- > Food and Friendship Center offering free or \$2 meals for seniors 60+ Services provided through the Recreation Department's Senior Programs:
- > Exercise classes
- > Art classes
- > Trips
- > Senior activity room at the Hamtramck Community Center

#### **MULTICULTURAL SERVICES**

ACCESS programs for immigrants at Mayson Neighborhood Center including: parenting classes, citizenship classes, language skills, child care, navigating local systems,. Programs are funded through Americorp and Dearborn United Way.

Piast Immigration Service Center: certified by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, the center assists immigrants with visa, documentation and status issues, and provides Medicaid enrollment. The center serves all communities, primarily Polish, Bosnian and Albanian, as well as Bengalis.

#### **ADULT EDUCATION**

Hamtramck public school adult education program at Mayson Neighborhood Center

#### **COMMUNITY POLICING**

HCI organizes community policing efforts that are managed by a 25-member steering committee, half of which are residents and half countycity agencies and community-based organization. The community policing initiatives are support by the Weed and Seed program to promote law enforcement, prevention and treatment, neighborhood restoration and economic development. Five Neighborhood Watch block clubs and a business watch initiative on Campau are engaged in crime prevention and neighborhood restoration projects such as graffiti removal and neighborhood cleanups. Although these are the main activities of the block clubs, they have the capacity to do more. The 4Cs, bounded by Carpenter, Campau, Caniff and Conant, South End, and Midtown around St. Florian are the most active block groups.

# PUBLIC SERVICES & FACILITIES

The City's dispute with Detroit over revenue-sharing funds from the GM Assembly Plant is threatening the level of public services. The City is currently maintaining services with its \$2 million budget stabilization fund, of which \$600,000 has already been allocated to the 2011 fiscal year. Layoffs have already occurred in the Public Works Department and other departments are also being considered for downsizing.

#### Hamtramck Fire Fighters

The size of the fire department has decreased over the years as funding has become scarcer. The department has 2 units and an ambulance that does medical runs, mainly to Detroit Receiving Hospital, Henry Ford or Children's Hospital. In addition to emergency response, the department does building inspections, code enforcement, prefire surveys, minor plan review for new buildings, and preventive education for children. The Hamtramck Fire Department has a mutual aid agreement with Detroit and Highland Park, both of which helped with the Sterling Oil fire of 2009. Generally, there are no fire hot spots in the City, calls are pretty evenly distributed.

The fire department faces several challenges, from outdated equipment, infrastructure, funding shortfalls, and cultural and linguistic barriers. The low water pressure in the City, only 35-45 lbs on average, hinders the department's firefighting capabilities, and the fire engines and fire station building are in need of upgrades. The department also needs more staff; however the department did not receive support for millage to purchase

new equipment. The department purchased a new engine in 2009 and is expecting a new pumper and other safety equipment through grant funding.

Poor road conditions and poor fire truck access on the streets due to parked cars are also challenges that make it difficult for the department to do its job. "When school lets out, people just park anywhere—they're all over the place." Immigrant communities pose an additional challenge with language and cultural barriers. Aside from one firefighter who knows Polish, no other languages are represented in the department. Immigrant communities call the fire department for transport to the hospital in non-emergency situations, which takes 1/3 of the fire response unit out of the city for 20 minutes.

#### **Hamtramck Police Department**

Marek Kalinowski became the new police chief in 2009. He is committed to developing community policing by getting the force out on bikes and at schools, block clubs and neighborhood groups, strengthening the town watch system. The police department has 24 shift officers, 8 supervisors, 5 detectives and 5 special assignment officers [e.g. traffic, surveillance, DEA, canine officer], however the department is not replacing officers that leave because they cannot afford to hire during the budget crunch. Nevertheless, the department would like to add another narcotics officer as the majority of the property crimes in the City are drugrelated. The police department has also fallen behind in technology when compared with the tri-county area. It is only in the last year that new radios and patrol car mobile data computers were procured with Homeland Security funding and communication grants.

#### Hamtramck Public Works

The Department of Public Works is a contractorbased organization with a staff of four that includes a supervisor in charge of water and three clerks. A code and ordinance division with one full time employee and a building department with four part time inspectors – rental, mechanical/electrical/plumbing, and two building – are staffed with contract employees. Water, sewer, trash, street sweeping, tree cutting, snow removal, and property cleanups are all contracted out. The department annual budget of \$1 million covers signs, trees, and roads.

Stormwater is a serious issue in Hamtramck. The existing infrastructure was originally built around 1910 as a sanitary system, and was not meant to manage stormwater. Over time, some modifications have been made to the system, but a lot of it is still the old cast iron. Also the system is tied into Detroit's and cannot be separated, therefore, in order to create separate stormwater and sewer systems, Detroit must also be on board. Full separation would cost Hamtramck approximately \$40 million. Furthermore, access to some federal funding requires separate sewer systems. An alternate strategy considered by the City is the construction of a retention spine through the City.

With the current stormwater infrastructure, twothirds of the City would be flooded in the event of a hundred-year storm. Planned improvements to the system would bring that flooding down to 10%. Currently, Conant and Mt. Elliot have stormwater pipes but the City needs more. Underground rainwater retention is needed on Holbrook, Conant and Caniff for storm events at a cost of \$10 million. The lack of proper stormwater management has also contributed to poor road conditions as water that seeps under the road freezes and cracks in cold weather, worsening potholes and warping.

The first phase of a \$956,000 Safe Routes to School grant is under construction in the summer of 2010. The improvements include new 5-ft. sidewalks,

compared with the old 4-ft. sidewalks, speed indicators, and safety education programming. The new sidewalks will be built on Brombach and Mackay from Holbrook to Carpenter, as well as sections of Buffalo, Edwin, Norwalk, Doremus, Burger, Casmere, and Grayling.

Building inspection and code enforcement up until 2006 tended to be haphazard. Since then an inspection coordinator has helped to boost notifications of violations up 5,000%, with a 60% response rate. The biggest issue is the predominance of absentee owners for vacant homes. Inspections of rental homes are conducted every three years, however the department is behind, with approximately 5,600 properties to inspect. The most common issues for these properties include out of code violations [electrical]. lead paint, and general house fatigue. Most main street businesses are in pretty good condition, but there seems to be an influx of owners trying to convert doctors' offices into restaurant use, especially on Conant. The City is trying to use the Wayne County nuisance abatement program to acquire and demolish properties. Properties turned over to Wayne County can be turned over to the City. but it can be time consuming. The City can also condemn a property if it is dangerous and place a lien on it; however this method is generally avoided as condemnation can be appealed.

#### Recycling

The Hamtramck Recycling Commission organizes a monthly recycling drop off site at Caniff and McDougall Streets that was inaugurated in 2009. The Recycling Commission consists of residents, business owners and students dedicated to environmental education programs and curb-side recycling. The City does not have funds for curb-side recycling but the drop-off site is an early step in the process of establishing a comprehensive recycling program in the City.

#### Post Office

The Hamtramck Post Office, which dates from 1936, boasts Art Deco architecture and Works Progress Administration murals and is located in the center of the City on Caniff Street. Residents of Hamtramck rallied to save the post office from being closed in 2009, and the U.S. Postal Service removed the branch from the list of first round closures, but the office remains at risk if there is a second round of closures. In the event the local branch is closed, operations will be shifted to the Hamtramck Annex office on Dequindre Street and 6-Mile Road.

#### William Dickerson Detention Facility

The William Dickerson Detention Facility is one of three jails operated by Wayne County, which has the largest jail system in the State of Michigan. The 587,000-sq. ft. facility sits on 16.7 acres and opened November 18, 1991 at a cost of \$60,500,000. The direct supervision facility has 868 beds and provides laundry and food services to the entire Wayne County jail system.

Programs at the facility include street clean-up work, substance abuse treatment, and a program called "Project Fresh Start," which addresses the factors involved in street-level prostitution. Participants in the program begin treatment in jail and move on to community-based, residential programs and transitional housing. Upon graduation from the program, their criminal records are expunged.

# PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

#### **Building Condition**

Building condition data was not recorded for industrial uses; secondary structures on residential lots and in residential yards, such as garages and storage sheds; and utility/infrastructure buildings. The quality of the housing varies and is attributed to several things. Absentee landlords were brought up several times in discussions with residents and stakeholders as a major problem affecting the upkeep of housing. Ageing housing stock is another problem as over half of the housing stock in the City was built before 1939. Overall, the buildings in Hamtramck ranked highly with 74% considered in "good" condition or better. The best building conditions generally correspond to the areas with the highest levels of homeownership. The worst conditions in the City are found south of Holbrook, particularly in the southwest corner where vacancy levels are high and the neighborhood is surrounded by industrial uses and the rail corridor. Buildings along the commercial corridors ranked mostly in the "fair" category.



#### > BUILDING CONDITION CLASSIFICATION:

- **A EXCELLENT** new construction and/or shows no signs of lack of maintenance or poor construction
- **B G00D** some signs of wear are visible and/or indicators of insufficient maintenance are present; all defects are minor and merely cosmetic.
- **C-FAIR** there are highly visible cosmetic defects as well as visible indications of minor structural issues.
- **D–P00R** the building's defects are well beyond cosmetic and significant structural issues may be present; the building is in danger of becoming hazardous.
- **F—VERY POOR** the building is structurally unsound, hazardous, and is not or should not be occupied.

# **BUILDING CONDITION**

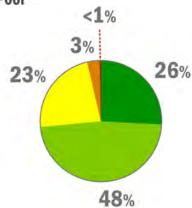
Excluding industrial uses, infrastructural/utility uses, and secondary structures on residential lots

A: Excellent

B: Good C: Fair

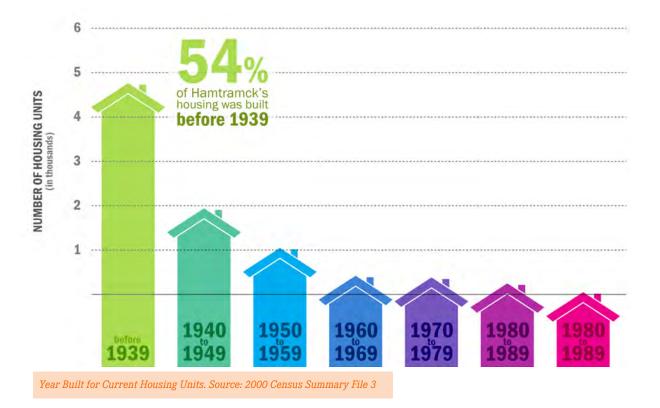
D: Poor

F: Very Poor



#### YEAR BUILT FOR CURRENT HOUSING UNITS

2000 census summary file 3



#### Code Enforcement

The City's code enforcement team consists of one supervisor and four inspectors. The biggest issue for the City is the large number of vacant residential structures, over 450 at last count, that are a magnet for fires, break-ins, and crime. The City, through the Department of Public Works, is attempting to seal up vacant buildings, and is studying a vacant property registration and fee system that other municipalities, such as a Farmington, have within their ordinances.

Another major issue for code enforcement is finding property owners in order to issue a violation, and getting owners to comply with the code once violations have been issued.

46 ONCE WE KNOW WHO OWNS THE PROPERTY, WE CAN GO AFTER THEM FOR VIOLATIONS. IF WE PON'T KNOW, THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN PO. ??

Rental properties, language barriers, and difficulty determining ownership hinder this process and

result in a lot of resources expended just to track down property owners.

WE SPEND A LOT OF TIME SITTING AT THE COMPUTER TRYING TO FIND OUT WHO OWNS A PROPERTY WHEN WE COULD BE GETTING OUT THERE, DOING WHAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DO. !!

There is also delay in the information management system. The permitting system relies on the tax assessors' database, but new data is not updated right away and the County is usually 6-8 months behind. Also houses that are not sold off in sheriff's auctions go to the city for \$1, but this information often does not reach code enforcement for several months.

Many property owners do not understand the housing code and business permitting process, or have language barriers which the code enforcement staff is not equipped to bridge. Some homeowners have converted upper floors into rentals without including a second means of egress as required by code. Business licenses have been given for home businesses that are not well-suited for residential zones [for example home auto repair] that are renewable every year. New businesses, mostly on Campau and Conant, set up without contacting the fire chief for permitting and fire code compliance.

#### Parcel Ownership

Most of the publicly-owned land in Hamtramck belongs to the City and acquires approximately five monthly through the nuisance abatement program.

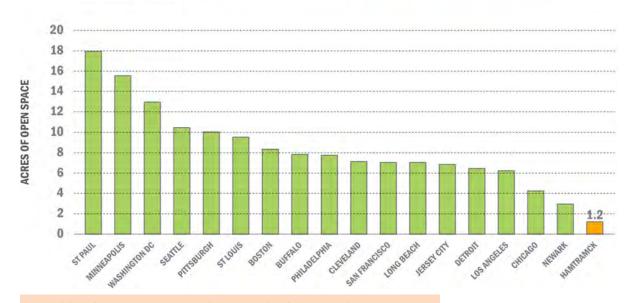
Other major public owners include the State of Michigan, HUD, Wayne County, and the Hamtramck Public Schools.

#### **PARKS & OPEN SPACE**

#### Parks & Recreational Facilities

Hamtramck offers only 1.2 acres of open space per 1,000 residents, which puts it at the low end of the scale for cities with comparable density. Most of the open space is located in the southern half of Hamtramck, and many neighborhoods in the City do not have easy access to open space and recreational facilities. Most participants in the 2003 Parks and Recreation Master Plan felt that the City had too little park land. The lack of available land in Hamtramck for new open space has been compounded by the terms of the R-31 housing discrimination case. Until the City produces all the housing required by the settlement, none of the City-owned land can be used for other purposes. The 2003 Master Plan found that the top priorities of community leaders and residents included safe, clean park facilities and a variety of programs for all age groups and cultural backgrounds.

### ACRES OF OPEN SPACE PER 1,000 RESIDENTS roughly comparable density cities PARCEL SURVEY/TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND



Acres of Open Space per 1000 residents Source: Interface Studio, Trust for Public Land



Parks and Play Spaces. Source: Interface Studio.

# PARKS & PLAY SPACES

- (A) EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER
- B HAMTRAMCK HOMES FUNSCAPE
- C HAMTRAMCK HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY CENTER
- (D) KOSCIUSZKO MIDDLE SCHOOL
- (E) ZUSSMAN PARK
- (F) DICKINSON WEST ELEMENTARY
- (G) ST. LADISLAUS GYM
- (H) POPE PARK
- (I) DICKINSON EAST ELEMENTARY
- (J) PULASKI PARK
- K HAMTRAMCK INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY
- (L) SENIOR HOUSING PLAZA
- (M) VETERANS' MEMORIAL PARK
- N PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY SERVICES
- (0) HOLBROOK ELEMENTARY
- P) HOLBROOK GARDEN

#### > Veterans' Memorial Park

Veterans' Memorial Park is the largest open space in the City at 26 acres and offers one of the few places for active recreation. The park serves as a memorial for war veterans and includes three ball fields, six tennis courts, two basketball courts [built in 2006], a soccer field, the Karpinski Playscape [built in 2008], and an ice skating rink.

The Keyworth Stadium, located next to the Board of Education Administrative Offices, was the first WPA project completed in Detroit in 1936. It has artificial turf for football and soccer, and played host to Ramadan activities in 2009. The park also houses the Roesink Stadium, built right before the Great Depression as a home field for the Detroit All-Stars Negro League team. Today it is a condemned and dangerous structure that has been fenced off.

The City's biggest open space asset is saddled with challenges. The main issue is a lack of activity around the park to provide natural surveillance. Most of the park is surrounded by inactive frontage; the backs of houses, the rail corridor, and low activity streets. As a result, bad behavior that occurs within the park, including drug-related activity and vandalism. According to stakeholders, kids are doing bad things there. Maintenance is also an issue; Roesink Stadium is condemned and dangerous, bullet-proof windows have been broken, and trash and graffiti dog the park. Drainage is an issue in the park and several spots in the park were observed to be flooded and almost impassable.

MNATURE IS RECLAIMING KEYWORTH STADIUM— THERE'S REAL GRASS GROWING UP THROUGH THE ASTROTURE!!!







Activity Surrounding Veterans Park. Source: Interface Studio

#### > Pulaski Park

Pulaski Park, an 8-acre park on the City's west side, is very well used in the summer and features a recently installed playscape with splash pad from the Recreation Department. The park also has a ball field and picnic areas.

#### > Pope Park

Pope Park is a small hardscaped plaza occupying one parcel on the southwest corner of Campau and Belmont.

Home to the largest Papal statue in the country, the small park is a visitor destination for the many Catholic [especially of Polish descent] visitors who are drawn to Hamtramck for its Polish heritage. The park has also achieved some small degree of cult [in the non-religious sense] status as one of the more curious spectacles Hamtramck has to offer.

Some cultural and religious events are held at Pope Park, but it is not frequented casually by the community as an open space. The park features chess/checker tables, seats and a mural by Dennis Orlowski. The upkeep of the space is maintained by local residents. Any proposed changes to the park have encountered difficulties due to the multiple ownership of the space.

#### > Zussman Park

This quarter-acre plaza is a passive landscaped space that sits across from the City Hall building and is surrounded by houses on three sides.

#### > Hamtramck High School Community Center

The Community Center is a 53,500 sq. ft. facility next to Hamtramck High School that houses three gymnasiums, meeting and class rooms, a weight training room, racquetball courts, saunas, exercise room, computer lab, concession stand, kitchen and offices. During the day, the center is used by the high school for physical education and athletics programs, but in the evening, the facilities are available to the public. The offices of the

Pope Park. Source: Interface Studio

Hamtramck Recreation Commission are located in the center. Use of the facilities at the community center requires a membership card and fee.

Programs are offered through the Recreation Department that include youth and adult art classes, parent/child play time, basketball, dance, martial arts, adult and senior exercise classes, swimming and water fitness classes, and children and teen summer programs.

#### **School Recreation Facilities**

Given the limited amount of open space, school recreational facilities are an important part of the City's inventory of recreational space.

- > Dickinson East Elementary School has a playground and there is a small parking lot but teachers end up parking around the neighborhood.
- > Dickinson West Elementary School has a gymnasium and a parking lot that doubles as a playground. Since the space is leased from the Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit the play space is taken over for parking in the event of functions such as funerals. Teachers park in the city parking lot.
- > Early Childhood Education Center has an indoor gymnasium and an outdoor playspace built in 2008.
- > Holbrook Elementary School has a playground across the street and a staff parking lot/play area. The school also has an indoor gymnasium and auditorium.
- > Kosciosko Middle School has ample parking and a playground outside, and a small gymnasium indoors.
- > Hamtramck High School has ample parking, a gymnasium and a swimming pool. The students use Keyworth Stadium and Playfair Fields for out-

side sports. The high school swimming pool is also open to the public and swimming and water fitness classes are offered.

#### Open Space Stewardship

The ownership and maintenance of open space in Hamtramck is divided between the City and the School District. The Recreation Commission functions as an intermediary between the Hamtramck Recreation Department and the School Board. The Recreation Department, which provides recreation, sports and exercise facilities, is a part of the School District. The Recreation Department also owns and manages Pulaski Park, Keyworth Stadium and Playfair Field, the Early Childhood Play Area, and the Community Center. A recreation millage passed in 2006 that brings \$1 million a year to the Recreation Department's operating budget.

Veterans' Park is divided in ownership. The City owns Veterans' Park from Campau Street to the parking lot, while the area northeast of the parking lot is owned and managed by the Recreation Department. The School District cuts the grass on their property and in Veterans' Park to maintain goodwill with the city. The fractured ownership of the City's open space is an issue of "politics and money". It's a road block for them.

The non-profit Preserve Our Parks is another open space organization that is mainly focused on Veterans' Park, where they have rebuilt and maintain the skating rink and renovated the playground. They also organize spring clean ups and tree plantings and are partners with Greening of Detroit. They are also spearheading the bike trail effort that aims to bring the Dequindre Cut up to Hamtramck.



Three Sisters Community Garden. Source: Interface Studio

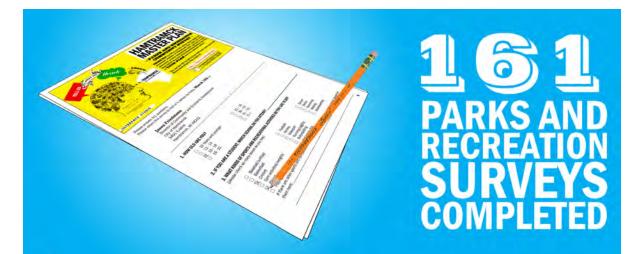
#### **Community Gardening**

Several community gardens are scattered around the City. The most prominent one is the community garden at the Hamtramck Public Library, which was created with donated plants. The Library garden consists of flowers, fruit and vegetable plants, all watered with rain water collected on site. Volunteers are solicited through the library. The garden on St. Aubin is a garden and art space connected to the Popps Packing Gallery. The Holbrook Garden is an educational extension project for the school and also a community project. Classes are held in the garden and vegetables grown in the garden are given away to residents in the neighborhood. There is a movement to turn the garden into a city park to protect it. In 2009, the city started letting people have community gardens on vacant lots for the first time and small garden plots have also been

noticed on city-owned vacant lots on the northwest side of town.

#### **Open Space Context**

Although Hamtramck has little open space, the City is part of a larger network that includes Detroit's riverfront, Belle Isle Park and the Dequindre Cut Greenway. The proposed extension of the Dequindre Cut Greenway to Hamtramck will provide easier access to these destinations. Closer to Hamtramck, the Lasky Park and Jayne Playground is a 64-acre park and recreation facility that offers baseball diamonds, basketball courts, tennis courts and a disc golf course. The Lasky Recreation Center offers fee-based activities and fitness center facilities.



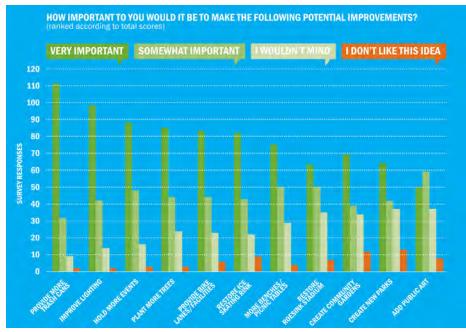
annex the land north of hamtramck and build a large park with running and walking track and pool...more emphasis on active recreational programs that actually place ALL ages outdoors...a new playground at veterans park to replace the one that was burned...hamtramck high school community center needs to much more accessible with free activities for the community...turn a space at one of the parks into a dog park--there are alot of dog people in the city and they dont have anywhere to take them to let them run around...more facilities for safe biking, such as bike lanes, bike paths...better (more regular) maintenance, so far as cleaning up broken glass and trash...it would be nice if we had sports tournaments that other cities have...there is nothing to do in the parks...more trees EVERYWHERE!!...cricket is missing!...there are no skateparks around hamtramck, the closest one is at least 6 miles away

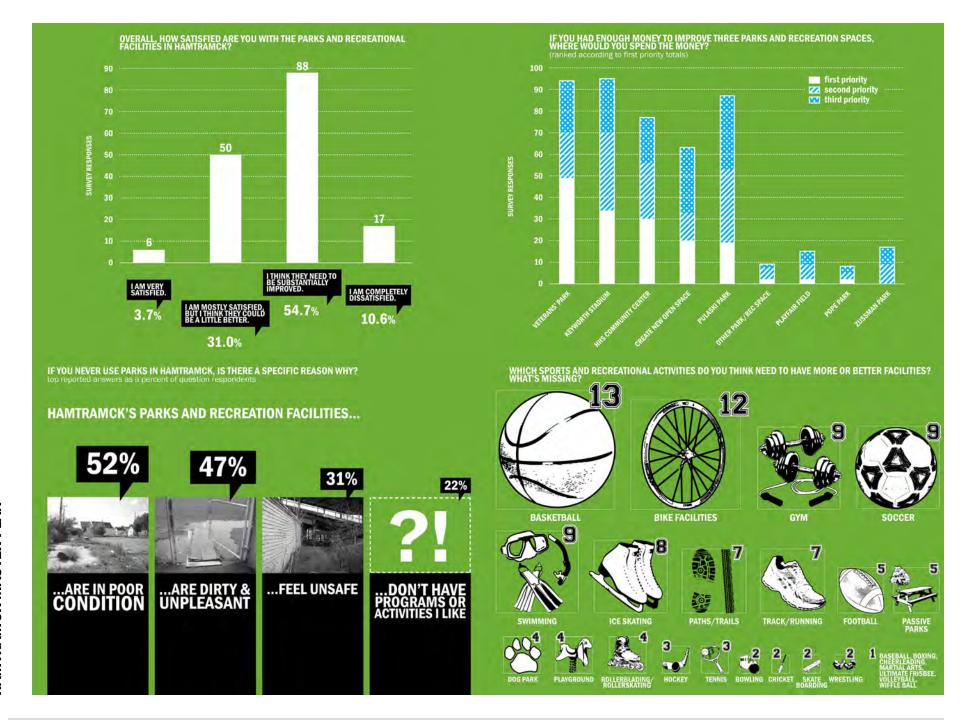
#### Parks and Open Space Survey

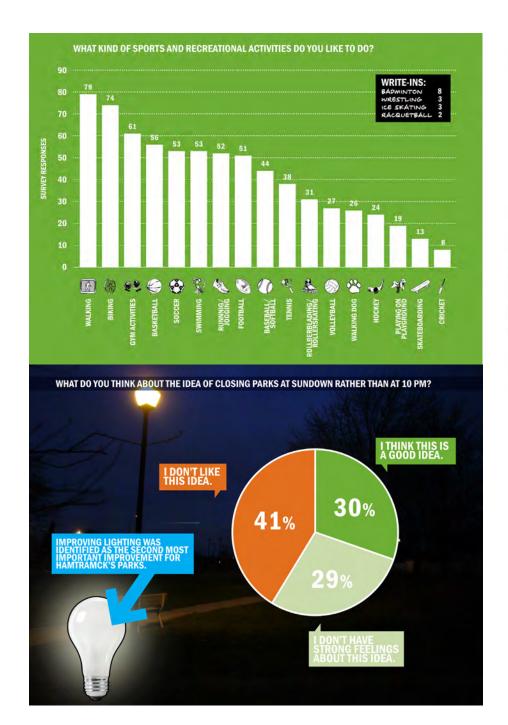
Interface Studio conducted an online survey of the City's parks and open space that received 161 responses. The survey asked residents about their activity preferences, their use of parks in Hamtramck and beyond, their satisfaction level with the parks, priorities for improvements, and willingness to volunteer. More than half of the respondents thought that the parks need to be substantially improved and another third, though satisfied, felt that some improvement is needed. The main themes for improvement included the need for better programming, improved safety, and better maintenance. The top improvements respondents would like to see have to do with these three themes: provide more trash cans. improve lighting and hold more events. Veterans' Park garnered the most votes a priority site for improvement, followed by Keyworth Stadium and the Hamtramck High School Community Center. Pulaski Park also ranked highly in second and third priority votes.

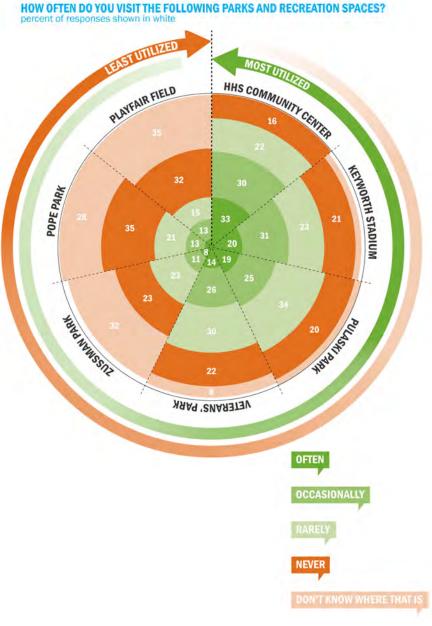
The following pages provide a detailed look at what survey respondents think about the park system and what could be better.

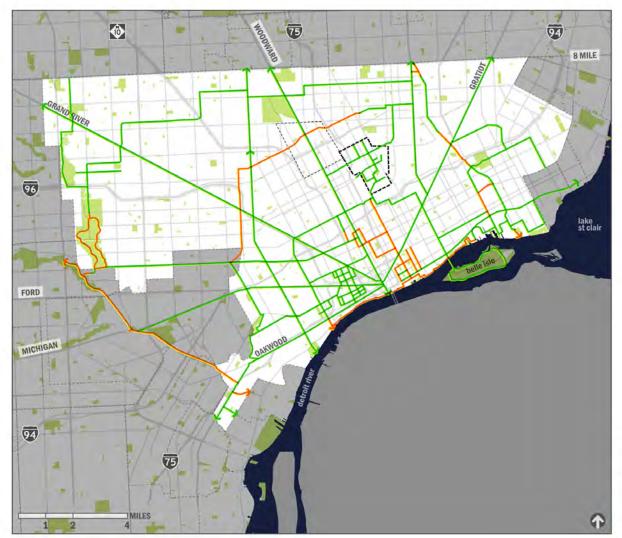












#### Planned Greenways in Hamtramck and the City of Detroit.

## Recreational Trail Planning Efforts Underway

Off street greenways are planned for Hamtramck that will link into the larger greenway system of Detroit, expanding the open space options for the City's residents. Preserve Our Parks is working on the Hamtramck Trail, a 1.5 mile non-motorized trail that will connect the City's neighborhoods with its open spaces and join up with the Dequindre Cut greenway at the Detroit border. The Dequindre Cut Greenway is a 2-mile rails-to-trails route that runs along the Grand Trunk Western Railway and leads to the Eastern Market and the riverfront. The first phase opened to the public in 2009.

## PLANNED GREENWAYS

On-street route
Off-street path

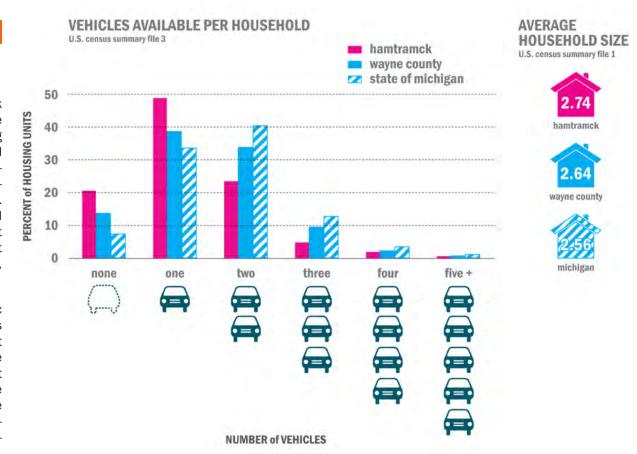
#### **TRANSPORTATION**

According to the U.S. Census, 20% of Hamtramck households did not have a vehicle available in the year 2000; half of the owner-occupied housing units were car-free, while 27% of renter-occupied housing units reported having no vehicles available. This number is slightly lower than Detroit "Motor City"'s 22% rate of households without vehicles. This shows a reliance on public transportation and destinations within walking distance for one out of every five households. At the same time, most Hamtramck commuters in 2000 drove to work, while only 4% took public transit and 5% walked.

Overall, the City does not suffer from many traffic volume and parking issues, but bus stops and bus information could be improved. The City has a lot of narrow streets, which may help account for the large number of cars with dents and scratches. But given the size of the City and its traffic volume, there is no need for streets wider than three lanes. Some investment has been made in the streetscape, particularly for the City's main commercial spine, Campau Street, to improve pedestrian safety.

#### Street Network

Elements of Hamtramck's street network fall under the jurisdiction of the City, the Michigan Department of Transportation [MDOT] for I-75, and the City of Detroit and Highland Park for arterials that connect with Hamtramck's streets. Funding mechanisms include the MDOT Local Agency Program and Act 51 of 1951 is a vital funding mechanism which determines the distribution of gasoline tax and vehicle weight tax revenues. Campau and Conant are both County minor arterials and Act 51 primary arterials, but do not connect to other County routes.



Holbrook and Caniff are also eligible for County funding.

The street network is made up of major two-way arterial streets [Campau, Conant, Caniff, Holbrook, and Hamtramck] which allow for travel across the entire City and continue beyond Hamtramck, two-way collector streets, one-way local streets and alleys. The one-way streets are generally paired. The block size throughout the City is fairly uniform but shifts in block orientation from north-south to east-west affect walkability and auto traffic as streets jog or end abruptly, especially north of Caniff on Campau. The state minimums for street

widths are 30 ft. for residential streets and 60 ft. for commercial streets. For the most part, the street widths are in line with the street hierarchy from arterial to local streets. However, Campau changes drastically north of Caniff where it has an additional lane of traffic in each direction and the street is slightly offset at the intersection. Holbrook similarly widens west of Campau for a block next to the shopping center. Surface street traffic volume is greatest on Campau and Conant, particularly along the widest part of Campau north of Caniff. Holbrook and Caniff also carry a high volume of traffic from the highway and Detroit through Hamtramck.



Street Network Source: Interface Studio

# STREET NETWORK

Freeway

← Major two-way street

← Minor two-way street

One-way street (west and north)

---> One-way street (east and south)

#### **Street Condition**

Based on a windshield survey of the City, the overall street conditions were rated "fair," meaning that roads are paved but not smooth, have some cracks, and show evidence of patchwork repairs. The lack of proper stormwater management and cold weather takes a toll on the City's roads causing them to warp and crack. Although most of the recently repaved streets were found to be in "good" condition, meaning they are smooth and consistent, 33% were found to be only in "fair" condition, a product of lower cost approaches to resurfacing such as chip sealing.

The best overall street conditions were found north of Caniff, in the streets closest to Campau, along I-75, and in the Grand Haven area. However, the quality of the streets in the northwest quadrant between the highway and Campau showed more signs of deterioration and also had the most potholes. Streets around the industrial uses on the west side of the City were in good condition and a number of streets had been recently repaved in the southwest section of the City. Of the City's major streets, Campau ranked as the best, while Conant, Caniff and Holbrook hovered between "fair" and "poor" ratings.

The middle section of Campau between Caniff and Holbrook was redone two years ago and was the last street improvement project that received county funding. The Campau streetscape and parking improvement project received \$758,000 from Wayne County and was overseen by the Hamtramck Downtown Development Authority. A main priority for the Department of Public Works is Conant Street, which was last reconstructed 35 years ago. They are trying to move it up on the County's Federal Aid Committee List for resurfacing. Other major priorities include Holbrook and Caniff; however, there are currently no transportation projects planned other than chip and seal work on



Detailed Street Condition. Dotted Lines indicate recently repaired street surfaces. Source: Interface Studio.

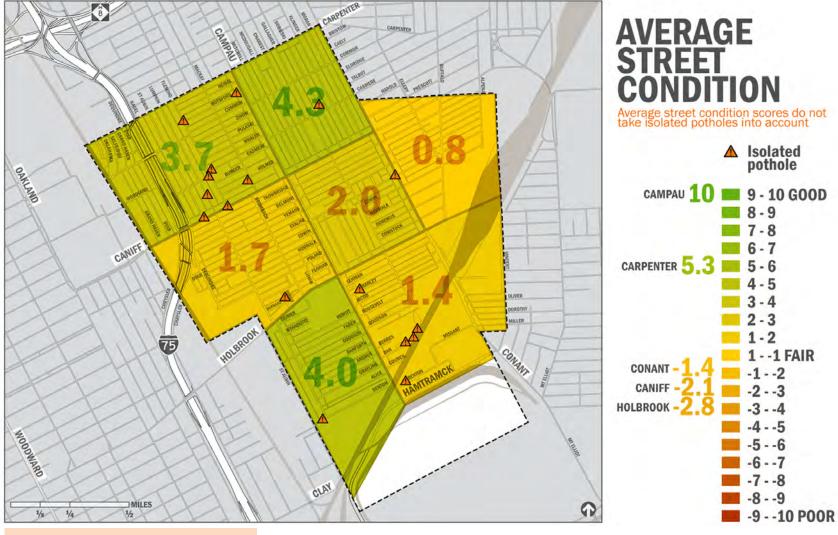
some roads. The State does not adequately fund the improvement of roads and the Department of Public Works does not have the budget for reconstruction, meaning that chip and seal stop gap measures are all that can be done. New roads cost \$1 million per lane per mile, which is the department's entire annual budget.

### STREET CONDITION

Good

FairPoor

▲ Isolated pothole



Average Street Condition Source: Interface Studio.

#### Rail

The Grand Trunk Western, a subsidiary of Canadian National Railway, runs through Hamtramck. Its passenger service was handed over to Amtrak in 1971 but is still owned by Canadian National Railway. The Conrail North Yard Branch [east-west] has tracks owned by Canadian National Railway and Consolidated Rail Corporation [which is owned by CSX and Norfolk Southern Railway]. Both are Class I railroads, which means they have annual operating revenue greater than \$256 million. The

rail yard is more than 750' wide in some places, effectively cutting off the City's southeastern neighborhood.

#### **Public Transportation**

The City is served by the Hamtramck shuttle run by the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation [SMART] and Detroit Department of Transportation [DDOT] buses, however service is very infrequent and has recently been reduced. The Hamtramck shuttle runs two fixed routes through

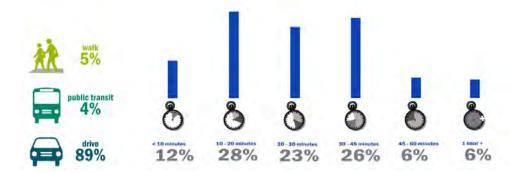
the City that connect with the regional SMART network at the Woodward/Manchester transfer point. Service is limited to Tuesday, Friday and Saturday with hourly shuttles between 9 AM to 3 PM. An advanced reservation curb-to-curb service is also available Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 4 PM.

Three north-south DDOT bus lines and one eastwest line connect Hamtramck with greater Detroit. Route 8 Caniff is the only east-west route through Hamtramck. It runs between Central High School and Hayes/8 Mile on weekdays only. Route 10 Chene runs along Campau and connects to the Rosa Parks Transit Center, the newly-constructed hub for 20 DDOT bus routes, and connections to SMART, the Detroit People Mover, and Transit Windsor buses. Route 12 Conant connects Hamtramck along Conant Street to the State Fair Transit Center and Belle Isle Park. Route 40 Russell runs along the western side of Hamtramck and connects to the Rosa Parks Transit Center and East Outer Drive/Van Dyke. The DDOT bus routes connect major industrial plants such as GM and American Axle to major destinations in Detroit, such as the central business district, Eastern Market

In 2009, Mayor Bing proposed cuts to DDOT bus service that would eliminate several routes, eliminate all overnight bus service, eliminate all Sunday bus service, and eliminate all Saturday night bus service. Citizens in Detroit and Hamtramck banded together to prevent these cuts from becoming finalized. After a series of meetings over the fate of Detroit's public transit system in 2009, the details of the proposed cuts to the DDOT bus service were decided. Although Mayor Bing did not go through with the elimination of Sunday service, several changes have repercussions for Hamtramck. The Route 24 Holbrook line was eliminated completely, weekend service was eliminated for the Route 40 Russell line, and late night service was eliminated

#### HAMTRAMCK COMMUTE MODE AND TIME (WORKERS 16 AND OVER)

2000 census summary file 3





Conrail Rail Yard Barrier.



Regional Bus Routes. Source: Interface Studio.

for the Route 12 Conant line. Hamtramck's already limited public transit options have been reduced to only two buses that run on weekends [route 10 and 12], only one of which offers late night service. People having to work weekends and late nights will be hard hit by the reduction in service, particularly since 20% of Hamtramck's households do not own a car. With fewer options for getting around the City and region, more people may be forced to rely on cars, which would burden the City's road capacity and parking availability.

# **BUS ROUTES**

# HAMTRAMCK SMART SHUTTLE

— Generalized route

# DETROIT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BUS

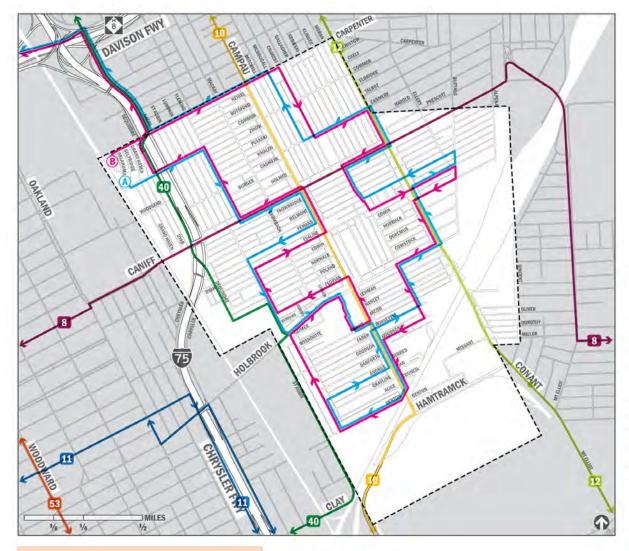
Route 8: Caniff

Route 10: Chene

Route 12: Conant

Route 40: Russell

Routes outside Hamtramck



Hamtramck Bus Routes. Source: Interface Studio.

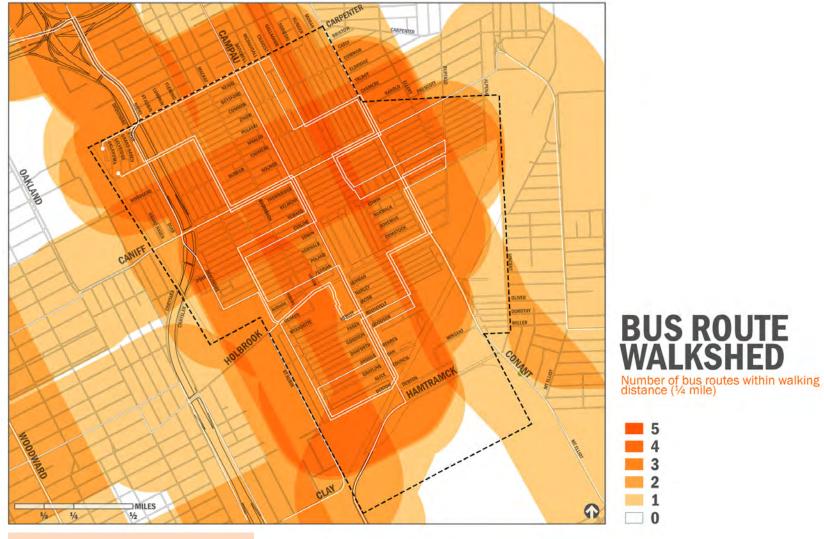
# **BUS ROUTES**

# HAMTRAMCK SMART SHUTTLE

- -A- Route A
- -B- Route B

# DETROIT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BUS

- 8 Route 8: Caniff
- Route 10: Chene
- Route 11: Clairmount
- Route 12: Conant
- Route 40: Russell
- Route 53: Woodward



Proximity to Bus Routes. Source: Interface Studio.

#### **Car Accident Hotspots**

Data on high-crash intersections between 2004 and 2008 from SEMCOG show Caniff as the most dangerous street in the City. Of the 11 worst intersections for crashes, Caniff appears five times and accounts for the two worst intersections at

Nagel and Campau. A federal \$475,000 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality improvement grant funded the traffic light replacement project along Caniff between Lumpkin and Buffalo which introduced energy efficient lights that are sequenced for better traffic control. Campau between Holbrook and Caniff also has a very high accident count. This stretch of Campau underwent major streetscape work in 2001 but remains a hot spot for accidents likely due, in part, to the high numbers of pedestrians in this area. Several intersections on Holbrook and Conant also have dangerous intersections.

**CANIFF & NAGEL** 

**CANIFF & CAMPAU** 

**CANIFF & CONANT** 

**HOLBROOK & CAMPAU** 

**CONANT & HOLBROOK** 

**EVALINE & CAMPAU** 

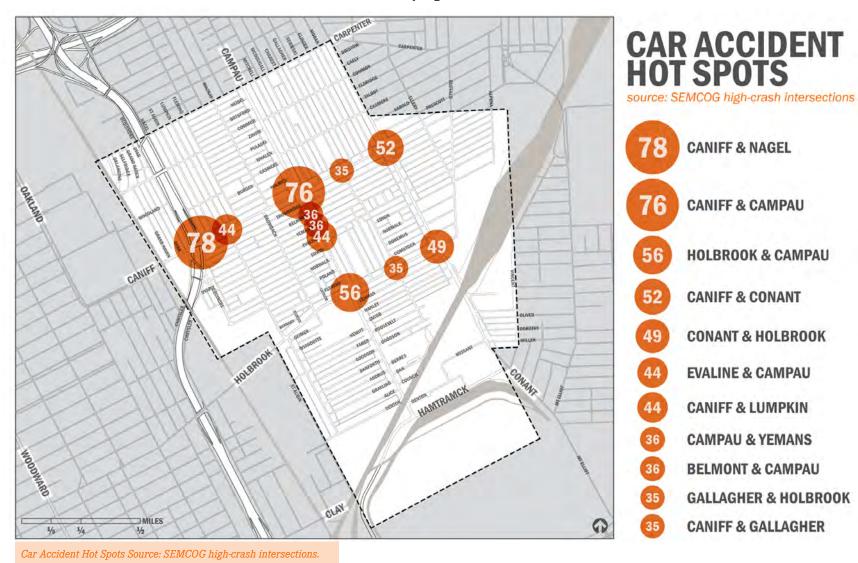
**CANIFF & LUMPKIN** 

**CAMPAU & YEMANS** 

**BELMONT & CAMPAU** 

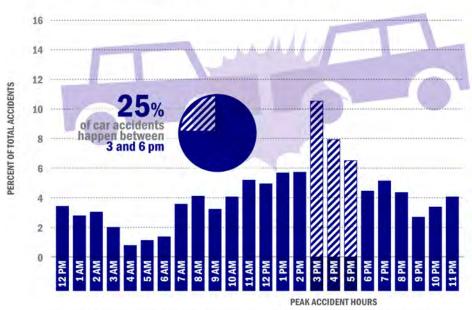
**CANIFF & GALLAGHER** 

**GALLAGHER & HOLBROOK** 

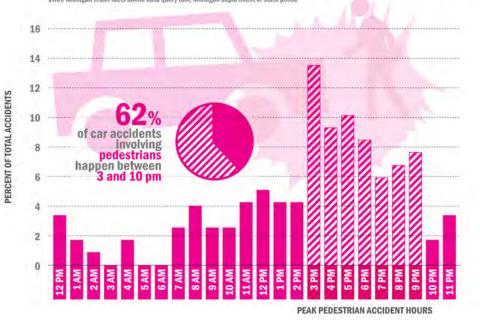


#### 2004-09 HAMTRAMCK CAR ACCIDENTS BY TIME OF DAY

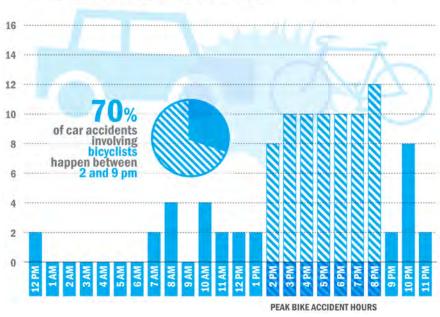
2009 michigan crash facts online data query tool, michigan department of state police; includes accidents involving pedestrians and bicyclists



2004-09 HAMTRAMCK CAR ACCIDENTS INVOLVING PEDESTRIANS BY TIME OF DAY 2009 michigan crash facts online data query tool, michigan department of state police



### 2004-09 HAMTRAMCK CAR ACCIDENTS INVOLVING BICYCLISTS BY TIME OF DAY 2009 michligan crash facts online data query tool, michligan department of state police



Hamtramck Car Accidents. Source: 2009 Michigan crash facts online data query tool, Michigan department of State Police.

MIF YOU CAN FIND THREE CARS IN A ROW IN HAMTRAMCK THAT DON'T HAVE A DENT IN THEM THEN YOU'VE STRUCK GOLD. !!

#### **Parking**

Most of the parking in the city is on-street, but the City also owns three municipal parking lots. Parking capacity does not seem to be an issue, however, there needs to be better signage and wayfinding for visitors. Interviews with city officials and residents did point to difficulty finding parking around City Hall. On narrow residential streets, people often park on sidewalks perhaps to avoid dents and scratches from cars passing by.

The city-owned parking lot behind the former Shoppers World on Campau has been a topic of hot debate through the master planning process. Originally, the Downtown Development Authority [DDA] intended to staff the lot with a private guard. When that idea was deemed unfeasible, an entrance gate with automated parking payment was installed. When the automated system "failed," the City installed parking meters, most of which have since been vandalized to the point of not being usable. Today, the lot stands mostly vacant, but those that do park there do so for free, not without risk.

IITHE PARKING LOT BEHINP POLONIA FOR A TIME WAS PROBABLY AVERAGING ONE CAR THEFT A DAY!!!

Nevertheless, the parking lot is important for the two Polish restaurants on the street, both of which are major local attractions, drawing patrons from miles away.

#### Walkability & Biking

Walkability issues were of serious concern to residents. Narrow and deteriorating sidewalks; a lack of crossing opportunities denoted by crosswalks, curb ramps and walk signals; poorly placed street furniture; and speeding traffic were some of the biggest barriers to a walkable environment. Conant, between Caniff and Carpenter, was identified as one of the most challenging places to walk due to narrow and poorly maintained sidewalks, speeding cars, and a lack of walk signals. Campau north of Caniff poses the challenges of high speed traffic. an overly wide right-of-way, and a lack of sufficient places to cross. The intersections on Campau at Caniff and at Holbrook are particularly challenging because of the dramatic changes in street widths which substantially increases the crossing distance for pedestrians and sets the crosswalk at an angle. Speeding was identified as an issue along Caniff and the northern end of Campau.

The streetscape improvements to the middle section of Campau were meant to increase pedestrian safety, but users have found that the sidewalks are

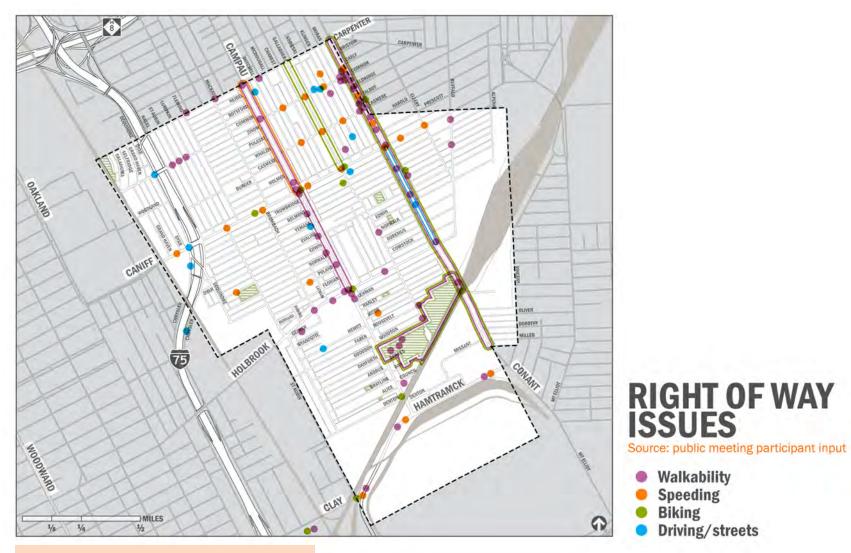
11THE CONCEPT OF THE PEDESTRIAN RIGHT-OF-WAY IS LOST HERE. !!

in fact difficult to navigate. Users have commented that there are too many bumpouts and that striped areas, planters and street furniture take away from space on the sidewalks. At present, new sidewalks are being built on Brombach and Mackay from Holbrook to Carpenter, as well as sections of Buffalo, Edwin, Norwalk, Doremus, Burger, Casmere, and Grayling with Safe Routes to School funding.

Biking in Hamtramck is also a difficult endeavor. There are no bike lanes in the City and often little space in the roadway to keep cyclists safe from speeding traffic. Caniff is a dangerous street to cross given the speed of traffic and high incidence of crashes, but it is also a necessary street to cross as it bisects the City. Many cyclists ride counter to traffic as a defensive move, but the lack of consistency results in confusion for both drivers and cyclists.



Cars parked on the sidewalk is a common occurrence on neighborhood streets.



Right of Way Issues. Source: Public meeting participant input.

### Transportation Planning Efforts Underway

#### > PRIORITY CORRIDORS

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments [SEMCOG] Direction 2035 – Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan for Southeast Michigan identifies and prioritizes transportation needs for the region through 2035. Each road corridor in the region was given a priority level based on safety, pavement, bridge, and congestion needs, and factors such as freight, transit, nonmotorized, traffic volumes, household and employment density, activity centers, and special populations.

SEMCOG identified 576 corridors as priority corridors for operations improvements, including traffic communications signal retiming. infrastructure improvement, and closed-circuit television cameras installation. Regional priority corridors carry very high volumes across multiple counties, have multiple [and more severe] needs, carry multiple modes of traffic [particularly trucks], and accommodate higher level land uses and demographics. Sub-regional priority corridors have multiple and relatively severe needs, carry multiple modes [although less truck traffic], and accommodate higher level land uses and demographics. Sub-regional priority corridors are less likely, compared to regional priorities, to serve multiple counties.

Hamtramck has three regional priority corridors [I-75, Campau and Caniff], and seven subregional priority corridors [Carpenter, the highway service roads, Dequindre to Holbrook, Holbrook, Buffalo, Hamtramck, and Conant]. Parts of I-75 in Hamtramck have also been identified as top ten priorities for congestion, safety and bridges. I-75 from Adams to I-696 and from I-94 to I-696 was identified as among the top 10 congestion priorities, the I-75 service drive/Dequindre Street from Gratiot to Carpenter was identified as a top

ten safety priority, and Caniff Street at I-75 was identified as a bridge priority. During the field survey, it appeared that this bridge had already undergone improvements.

#### > COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL TRANSIT SERVICE PLAN

This plan was adopted in 2009 and identified transit services for Southeast Michigan looking out to 2035. The major elements of this plan are to increase service on existing routes and introduce rapid transit corridors. The plan details light rail on Woodward Avenue, arterial rapid transit service, bus rapid transit or light rail, and commuter rail between Detroit and Ann Arbor, Pontaic, Monroe and Port Huron, with priority on the lines along Woodward and Gratiot. Hamtramck is on the commuter line to Port Huron which is slated fro 2020 and a potential station would be built at the south end of the City, spurring development in an area currently cut off and neglected. The plan also calls for increased service on several bus routes including route 12 Conant to reduce the maximum wait time to 30 minutes.

#### > WOODWARD AVENUE LIGHT RAIL

Detroit is planning to break ground on a \$420 million light rail system along Woodward Avenue downtown. M1 Rail, a private consortium, is developing the project and will operate it. The first phase of the light rail system is unique in that it is funded by private interests, who have contributed \$125 million to the 3.4 mile downtown phase of the line. Construction is expected to begin at the end of 2010 and the rail is scheduled to start running in 2012. DDOT has plans to extend the line all the way to 8 Mile at a cost of \$250. The second phase of 4.5 miles is scheduled to begin after 2012 with the federal government covering 80% of the cost and Detroit the remaining 20%. The arrangement, while novel, has sparked concern that it sets a precedent whereby private companies can attract federal funding to extend projects.

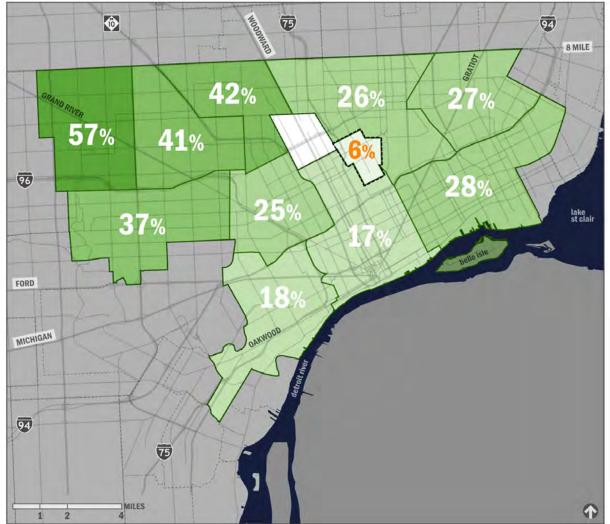
# PUBLIC REALM/QUALITY OF LIFE

#### Tree Canopy

Only 6% of Hamtramck has tree coverage and less than half of the tree canopy is located in the public realm. Detroit, by comparison, has average tree coverage of 31%, which is on par with other cities east of the Mississippi. American Forests, which conducted a study of Southeast Michigan in 2006, recommends coverage of 40% for cities east of the Mississippi.

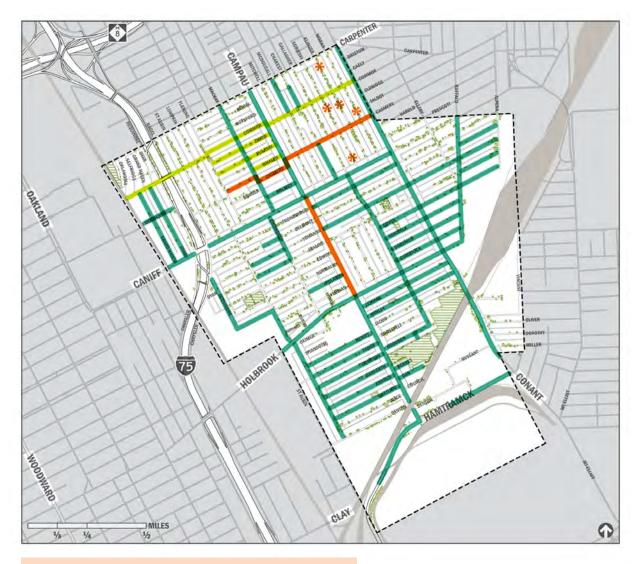
Most of the street trees in Hamtramck are located in the residential blocks, but even so, most of the blocks surveyed had low tree counts ad many of the trees were in poor health. The major corridors - Campau, Caniff, Holbrook, and Conant - are almost completely without street trees. Some blocks in the northwest quadrant and the full length of Commor have requested tree plantings. But several residents have complained about problems with the maintenance of existing trees, especially on Casmere and Campau. In some cases, the tree planting areas are too narrow and the trees end up ripping up sidewalks. Hamtramck also lost a lot of trees in the 1997 tornado; however, many of the trees which were killed are still in the ground 13 years later. Unhealthy, dead or dying trees are a danger to public safety and mar the City's image.

Additional street trees can benefit Hamtramck through improved air quality, reduced heat-island effect, better stormwater management, and increased property values. However, new planting strategies must give careful consideration to planting location and tree type to ensure that the tree stays healthy and is well maintained.



## PERCENT TREE COVER BY DETROIT PLANNING CLUSTER

Percent tree cover by Detroit planning cluster.

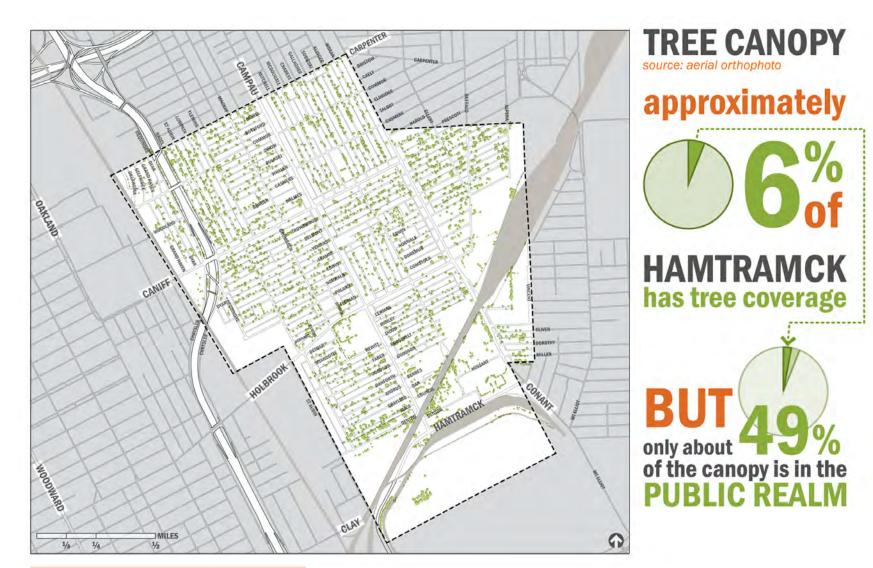


Tree Issues. Source: Public meeting participant input, Interface Studio

# TREE ISSUES

- Surveyed low tree counts
- Requested tree plantings
- Reported problem with existing trees



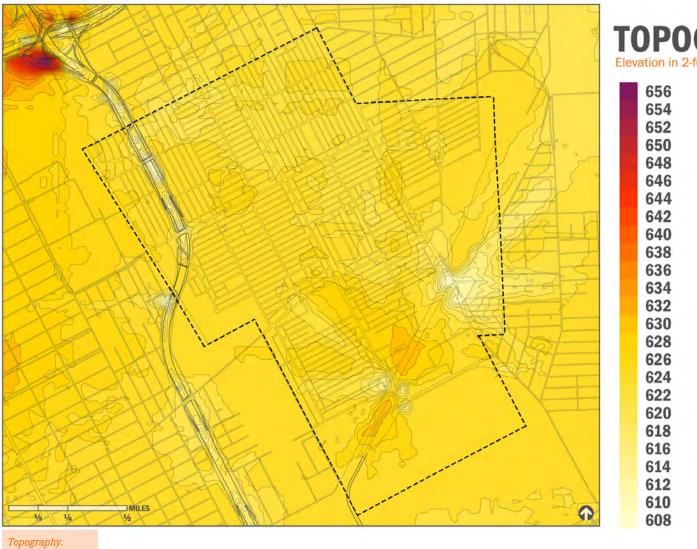


Tree Canopy. Source: Aerial Pictometry, Interface Studio

#### Topography

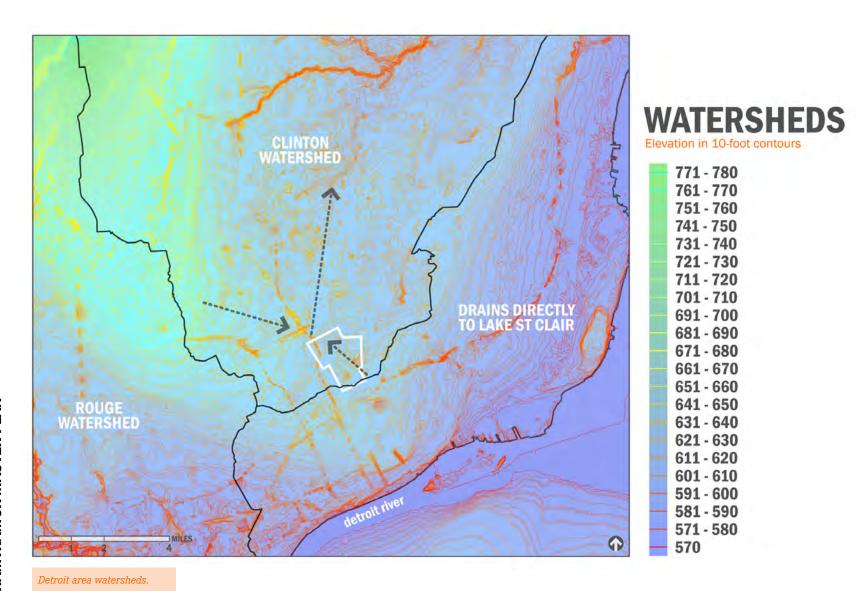
Hamtramck is relatively flat. The biggest changes in elevation occur along the rail corridor, with the highest elevation around the rail embankment and the lowest points at Conant and Campau where the rail crosses overhead. From the rail embankment,

the land slopes down toward the northeast quadrant of the City. The relative flatness of the City and poor stormwater management infrastructure means that stormwater often pools and floods streets and basements. The City lies in the Clinton watershed and surface runoff generally flows across the City from southeast to northwest to a low-lying point just outside the border where it continues north to the Clinton River.



# **TOPOGRAPHY**

Elevation in 2-foot contours



#### **Stormwater Management**

Hamtramck's existing stormwater management infrastructure system was built around 1910 as a sanitary system, originally not meant to manage stormwater at all. As a young and less-densely developed settlement at the time, Hamtramck was mostly unpaved—open-air ditches were sufficient to channel excess water away from structures and unpaved roads. Today, Hamtramck has an impervious surface cover of X.X%, which means that when it rains, there is very little opportunity for rainwater to be absorbed into the ground through the natural processes of the water cycle. Therefore, the City relies heavily on a combined sewer system that is now nearly a century old to perform the critical task of channeling heavy rains out of the city. Additionally, in recent years, the City of Hamtramck has responded to resident complaints of mosquitoes and vermin near the few remaining open air ditches and retention ponds by filling them in—without providing compensatory means of retaining the additional volumes these potentially unsanitary yet functional features previously accommodated.

"THIS IS AN ASPHALT JUNGLE!!

The long-term effects of paving over Hamtramck over the past hundred years, combined with the increasingly inadequate capacity and condition of stormwater infrastructure, have been disastrous. Throughout the planning process, residents have voiced grave concern over the repeated flooding of streets, schools, parks, and basements after storm events, which amount to a serious quality of life concern and threat to housing conditions and values. In fact, a major ten-year storm event in June of 2000 flooded over 500 basements and caused enough damage to private property to initiate a class action lawsuit against the City [which is still in the discovery stage] for its failure to adequately manage stormwater. The City projects that a hundred-year storm would severely flood about two-thirds of the City, given the performance of the existing stormwater infrastructure, and the City has extensive improvement plans but far insufficient funds to address the problem.

At present, after entering a stormdrain, stormwater generally flows across the City in mostly twelveto fifteen-inch pipes to larger collection pipes on Lumpkin Street south of Caniff Street, Joseph



Campau Street, and Conant Street, which convey the sewage and stormwater south to a few outlets to the City of Detroit. While the Lumpkin and Campau main collection pipes have very frequent connection points with the City's network of smaller pipes, the massive Conant pipe, which is 15 feet in diameter and buried approximately 40 feet below the street, has only one means of egress [at Denton Street] for Hamtramck's pipe network to empty into this major drainage vein. Thus, in essence, the Conant pipe, which stretches all the way from 8 Mile Road to a water treatment plant near the Detroit River, is largely an "untapped" opportunity for improved stormwater drainage.

#### Litter and Illegal Dumping

The large number of vacant lots and abandoned homes in and around Hamtramck attract illegal dumping. Most of the dumping was observed closest to the border with Detroit where there are large areas of vacant land. Large items such as furniture, building scrap, and rubber tires were the most commonly left behind. While illegal dumping occurs mainly on the fringes of the City, littering is also a major problem and is widespread throughout the City. Resident mapping of quality of life issues indicate the worst areas for littering are Commor Street between the highway and Fleming, Campau Street north of Caniff, and Veteran's Park. The prevalence of littering creates a negative image of the City and encourages further littering and vandalism as the area appears uncared for.

LOTS OF ILLEGAL DUMPING ON VACANT LOTS—SAFER TO DUMP HERE THAN IN DETROIT—THEY DON'T GET MUGGED, ??



# FLOODING AND LITTER ISSUES

Source: public meeting participant input

- Flooding
- Litter/Illegal dumping

#### **Environmental Health**

Heavy industry in Hamtramck has taken a significant toll on the community's environmental health, leaving behind contaminated soil and airborne pollutants. Lead is of particular concern in the community due to historical lead smelting operations, lead paint manufacturing, and lead paint in homes. The Lead Safe Coalition abates houses through a \$1 million dollar grant for both landlords and tenants. Up to \$23,000 is available per home for new windows and paint. The grant is administered through Wayne County, but Hamtramck leads in the number of applications.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality reported in 2006 that elevated lead levels in children's blood constituted a public health hazard for residents in the area around I-75 and Caniff which was the site of three metal smelters. Some soil and paint have been remediated by the Wayne County Health Department as part of the redevelopment of the area. The former Sherwin-Williams lead paint plant site on Denton also left behind significant levels of lead and other paint chemicals in the soil.

The high level of contamination of the BASF site has taken years of back and forth with the City to address. The property was remediated to a commercial level; however, other uses may require further remediation.

11 HEARD THAT THE FORMER LEAD PAINT FACTORY WIND BLEW PARTICULATES INTO AREA AROUND LUMPKIN AND IT'S STILL CONTAMINATED. I DON'T DRINK THE TAP WATER HERE AND I WON'T GROW VEGGIES BECAUSE I'M TERRIFIED THAT THE WATER IS TOXIC. ??

The Hamtramck Medical Waste Incinerator opened in 1991 on Christopher Street in a poor Arab-American and African-American neighborhood and polluted the air with high levels of mercury. The Hamtramck Environmental Action Team [HEAT] joined forces with the Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition and the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services to study the environmental impact. In 2006, after a prolonged effort, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality [now the Department of Natural Resources and Environment] revoked the company's operating permit based on their environmental history, shutting down their operations in Hamtramck. Viewed as a major environmental justice victory, the cheering may be short lived as the company submitted another permit request in 2008.

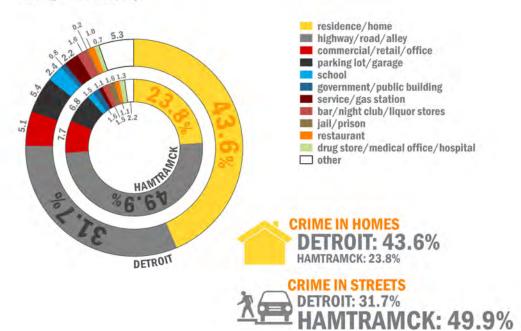
#### Crime and Perception of Safety

In its 2007 application for Weed and Seed Communities, the Hamtramck Community Initiative [HCI], through community meetings with residents, identified several main concerns: assault, burglary, and robbery in homes and on the street; pervasive levels of auto theft; growing levels of abandoned and blighted property; unsupervised youth when suspended from school; lack of participation in personal development and educational activities for youth during non-school hours; and lack of sufficient communication and coordination with local police.

From 1999-2008, the Hamtramck crime index was more than double the U.S. average. Most crime was committed against property rather than persons. The bulk of the crime in Hamtramck during that period was auto theft, though it fell from 38% in 1999 to 27% in 2008. The City still has a reputation for a high incidence of car theft, and once had the highest level of auto theft in Michigan, according to the police department. Although things have improved, the perception of risk remains and

#### 2006 PERCENT SHARE OF CRIMINAL INCIDENTS BY LOCATION

2006 michigan incident crime reporting



residents and business owners worry that one of the main concerns of potential visitors to the City is car theft. The attempt to staff the municipal parking lot behind Shopper's World was a response to this concern.

Burglaries and theft were the next most common type of crime in the period from 1999 to 2008. Arson, though not among the most common types of crime, has been rising, with 15 recorded in 2008. This trend is of concern due to the large number of vacant and abandoned houses and continuing fallout from the financial crisis. Crimes against persons, mainly assaults and robberies, stayed at a relatively constant rate over the period of around 20% of the crimes recorded.

Offenders under 21 years of age accounted for 30% of the arrests in Hamtramck in 2006. Stakeholder and residents indicated that many school-age teens get into trouble during their lunch break and after school hours. Data showing criminal incidents by time of day reveal a spike around noon and 3PM which also corroborates this account and indicates a need for better programming for youth outside of school hours.

Half of the crime that occurs in Hamtramck occurs on the street as opposed to in the home, which accounts for about a quarter of the crime. This statistic concurs with the crime type data that shows auto theft and other theft accounting for over half of the crime. According to the police department, most of the crime that occurs in the home is drug-related. In Detroit, more crime occurs

in the home [43.6%] than on the street [31.7%]. The next most common location of criminal activity is in commercial/retail establishments and in parking lots and garages.

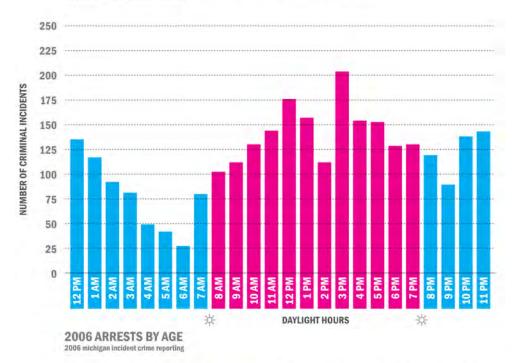
Many residents feel that criminals are coming into Hamtramck from Detroit.

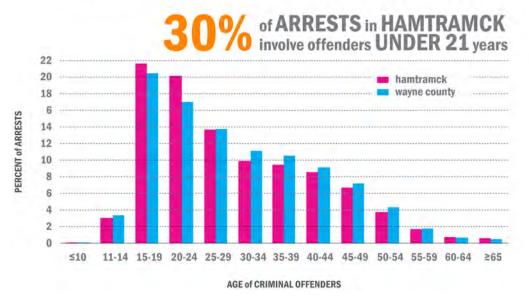
MITHE BIGGEST SAFETY ISSUE FOR HAMTRAMCK IS ITS SURROUNPING NEIGHBORHOOPS—THEY ARE TOUGH AND BRING BAD ELEMENTS TO TOWN. ??

Results from the collaborative mapping exercise and public meeting input show that concerns about safety are strongest along the border with Detroit on Carpenter and Conant Streets. The neighborhood east of Conant Street and Veterans' Park, particularly at the Conant entrance, were also identified as areas that are not safe. Information from the police department supports this observation; the majority of breaking and entering cases occurred on the north end of the City and those apprehended have Detroit addresses. The City responded by flyering the neighborhood and working with Crime Stoppers, an international nonprofit crime fighting organization that empowers residents, schools and businesses by encouraging anonymous reporting of crime and raising awareness.

#### 2006 HAMTRAMCK CRIMINAL INCIDENTS BY TIME OF DAY

2006 michigan incident crime reporting







Lighting and Safety Issues. Source: Public meeting participant input



Veteran's Park by Day & Night.



#### Night Visibility

Poor visibility at night due to insufficient lighting provides cover for criminal activity and adds to the perceived sense of danger in some areas after dark. The map of public input on lighting and safety issues shows a correlation between the two, particularly on Carpenter, Conant and in Veterans' Park. The park is almost entirely sequestered from view, except for at the entrance on Campau Street. It is also very deep, extending all the way from Campau to Conant, leaving many dark corners completely hidden from view. Residents pointed to the basketball courts, tucked at the furthest end of the park near Conant, as a spot for criminal activity at night, even though there is a fence and sign indicating the park's hours from dawn to dusk. Residents also indicated that lighting on the two main commercial corridors, Campau and Conant, was insufficient, even though Campau has pedestrian-scale lighting between Caniff and Holbrook. Street lighting in most of the City is provided by cobrahead lights which direct light to the street and do little to help illuminate sidewalks and areas around buildings.

# LIGHTING AND SAFETY ISSUES

Source: public meeting & collaborative map participant input

- Insufficient lighting
- Safety

#### **LOCAL DESTINATIONS**

MWE ARE A TOWN THAT IS KNOWN FOR OUR MUSIC FESTIVALS, OUR ETHNIC FESTIVALS, OUR BARS, OUR FOOD. ??

#### **Places**

"Hamtramck is known for the 'three Bs' – beauty parlors, bakeries, and bars"...and much, much more. Visitors to the city enjoy a great selection of restaurants, ethnic groceries, Polish bakeries, and a lively bar scene. Restaurants in the City run the gamut from Yemeni to Indian to Polish. Polonia, a local institution, garnered national fame when it was featured on Anthony Bourdain's food travel show. The ethnic markets offer a wealth of food options that draw people from near and far. The DDA surveyed over 1,000 customers at the Polish market and discovered that 60% of them had come from the suburbs. Hamtramck is famously home to some of the best music venues and bars in the state and the music scene is nationally recognized.

Aside from food and drink, the City offers unusual cultural destinations. The Polish Art Center, which also draws customers from outside of Hamtramck, sells Polish arts and crafts, books and food. The Ukrainian American Archives & Museum, which was founded in Hamtramck in 1958, houses materials documenting Ukrainian culture, history and life in America. The Hamtramck Historical Commission, a part of the City Government, has been amassing a collection of archival materials about the City's history for the last 11 years and plans to open a historical museum. Currently they lead guided bus and walking tours, which have grown from just one every three months to one a week in the summer months. Finally, Hamtramck Disneyland is a totally

unique labor of love created by Dmytro Szylak that attracts curiosity seekers from around the world.

#### **Events**

Hamtramck takes pride in its many different events both old and new. The City's famous Paczki Day celebrations coincide with Fat Tuesday. The event is an all-day party with a parade and live entertainment at the bars, many of which open early in the morning. The Labor Day Festival is another big event with food, live music, carnival rides, and a Polish Day Parade that draws people from all over the region. It started in 1990 and originally attracted 500,000. The Hamtramck Blowout Music Festival has been going strong for 13 years in bars all around the City, and showcases hundreds of bands from the greater Detroit area. The North American Bangladesh Festival, in its ninth year, is an all-weekend event with food, performances and vendors in the heart of the Bangladeshi community on Conant [aka Bangladesh Avenue]. Among the other celebrations that showcase the diversity of the City are Bengali New Year and the Hindu celebration of the birth of Hare Krishna, which includes a parade through the City.

#### **Arts & Cultural**

For decades, artists from the neighboring art schools – Cranbrook Academy of Art, Wayne State University, and the College for Creative Studies – have been drawn to Hamtramck's urban qualities, laid back attitude, affordability and diversity. The City has a strong art and music scene, but lacks support. For good and for bad, as an artist "you're left alone" in Hamtramck. Artists interviewed in the planning process expressed a desire for a stronger link with the City to help connect artists to unused spaces and provide information and technical assistance for grants, insurance and taxes similar to a small business or entrepreneurial association specifically targeted to artists and arts busi-

nesses. Not enough formal spaces exist to exhibit work, although Popps Packing, Edwin Gallery and Public Pool are working to change that. Although pop-up galleries in vacant storefronts and in bars offer some additional opportunities for exhibition, it is not enough to support the space needs of the community.

In order to support the needs of the arts community and economic development, an Arts and Cultural Plan was developed that put forth two main objectives:

- > to help direct visitors to Hamtramck's arts and cultural attractions.
- to create a strategy to help the City facility greater coordination among local arts and cultural organizations.

The challenge of the plan lies in striking a balance between keeping the underground character that many of the artists savor and marketing the community.

MYOU ALWAYS HAVE TO LOOK BELOW THE SURFACE IN ORDER TO REALLY SEE THE SCENE IN HAMTRAMCK. ??

#### HATCH

The dominant arts organization in Hamtramck, formed in 2006 and organizes exhibitions, drawing events, concerts, and monthly community education workshops. The group is currently renovating the former Hamtramck Police Station for exhibition and studio space. While HATCH is a valuable resource for traditional visual artists, the artistic community of Hamtramck is exceptionally diverse, encompassing not just visual artists, but also musicians, writers, designers and artists from different cultural backgrounds. Devising a way to get all of these different components of the artistic community under one umbrella would require substantial capacity building.

# **OVERVIEW OF EXISTING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

The purpose of this section is to present sustainable economic development goals, objectives, and strategies for Hamtramck. Careful analysis of existing conditions, coupled with expansion of existing assets and strengths will provide the basis for a sound, implementable, and sustainable economic development strategy. The community's character and unique attributes are its most promising assets: continue doing what you do well and build upon what is working. Communities that are doing a good job with what they have are attractive to potential investors and business developers.

# Hamtramck's Place in the Region and State

Hamtramck is surrounded by Detroit and Wayne County, and enclosed by interstates and rail lines to the west and south. To a certain degree, these factors isolate Hamtramck, and have created an enclave of density and diversity that the larger region does not proportionately share.

Hamtramck does however, share many attributes with the rest of the southeastern Michigan region. These attributes include a strong history of manufacturing and innovation, particularly in the automotive sector. Metropolitan Detroit is world known for its highly skilled workforce comprised of industrial and automotive engineers, seasoned crafts and trades workers, talented professionals, and ambitious business developers, an identity that equally applies to the City of Hamtramck. Hamtramck has also shared in the prolonged recession that has gripped the state and region for much of the last decade. The effects of this recession are felt in various ways:

- > Record high unemployment rates.
- > The decline and scaling back of American automotive manufacturers.
- > The loss of small businesses that either supplied the automotive plants or provided consumer goods and services that are no longer in demand due to high unemployment.
- > The decline of municipal budgets due to decreased property taxes and revenue sharing from the state.



# Attributes of Hamtramck's Employment Base

According to the City of Hamtramck Community and Economic Development Department, the average number of business licenses for the years 2006 through 2009 was 488. In 2009, 480 business licenses were issued, of which 82 were for new businesses and 398 were renewals of existing businesses. The ten largest employers in Hamtramck in 2009 are listed below. Notable is that only one of the ten largest employers in Hamtramck is neither related to the automotive industry nor significantly funded by government sources [education, medical, and government]. This suggests a need to add more diversity to achieve a more sustainable base of employers.

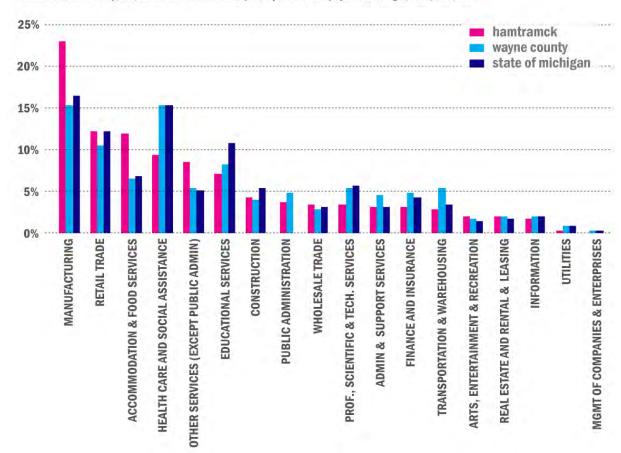


Largest Hamtramck Employers, 2009 Source: City of Hamtramck Note: Employment by Wayne County is centered in the William Dickerson Detention facility. Industries in which Hamtramck workers are engaged are shown in the following charts. It should be noted that these statistics are collected from employers and therefore reflect local employment numbers, regardless of where the workers live.

The industry cluster with the largest employment in Hamtramck is manufacturing. This is typical in Michigan and the Detroit metropolitan region. Hamtramck's second largest industry category is accommodations and food services, followed closely by retail trade. While Hamtramck's ratio of retail trade is comparable to the state's ratio of retail trade, Hamtramck has a much higher percentage of businesses in accommodations and food services than does the State of Michigan or Wayne County. The large accommodations and food services sector is one of Hamtramck's strengths, likely fueled by Hamtramck's robust immigrant population which has helped to create a unique, local food culture.

#### **INDUSTRIES 2009**

Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2008; ESRI, 2009

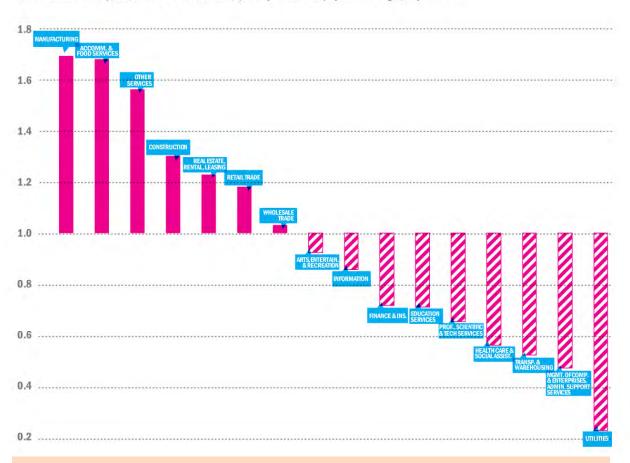


Employment by Industry, 2009 Source: Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2008; ESRI, 2009.

The location quotient is a ratio that compares concentrations of industry groups between two geographic areas. The location quotient analysis expresses Hamtramck's employment concentration by industry cluster relative to employment in Wayne County. If a given industry cluster in Hamtramck were to have the same concentration in Hamtramck and Wayne County, its location quotient would be 1.0. For those industries that are more concentrated in Hamtramck compared to Wayne County, location quotients are above 1.0. shown in green in the figure below. Conversely, industries that are less concentrated in Hamtramck compared to Wayne County have location quotients less than 1.0, shown in red. This analysis reveals again that manufacturing, accommodations and food services, and other services are prevalent industries in Hamtramck, compared with Wayne County. Utilities, transportation and warehousing, management and administrative support, and health care and social assistance industries are relatively under-represented in Hamtramck.

#### **LOCATION QUOTIENT ANALYSIS Hamtramck Versus Wayne County, 2008**

Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, May 2008



Location Quotient Analysis, Hamtramck versus Wayne County, 2008 Source: Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, May 2008.

#### HAMTRAMCK INDUSTRY CHANGE

Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2008; ESRI, 2009

Note: Numbers do not include "public administration," "unclassified," public sector, or self-employment.

NAICS CODE	INDUSTRY DESCRIPTION	2001	2008	01-08 CHANGE CAGR	***********
51	Information	85	98	2.1%	100
61	Educational Services	67	75	1.6%	die .
52	Finance and Insurance	142	158	1.5%	
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	83	90	1.2%	1.1
54	Prof., Scientific, and Tech. Services	290	307	0.8%	1.1
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	546	558	0.3%	1
11 21	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas	0	0		
	Extraction	0	0	alteria Pi	
55-56	Mgmt. of Comp. & Enterprises, Admin. &			111111111111111111111111111111111111111	1
	Support Services	270	267	-0.2%	
72	Accommodation and Food Services	937	916	-0.3%	
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	184	167	-1.4%	
44-45	Transportation and Warehousing	194	175	-1.5%	
48-49	Utilities	9	8	-1.7%	
81	Other Services (except public admin)	382	335	-1.9%	
42	Retail Trade	876	764	-1.9%	
22	Construction	276	235	-2.3%	
31-33	Wholes ale Trade	366	287	-3.4%	
23	Manufacturing	1,806	1,320	-4.4%	
10	TOTAL: ALL INDUSTRIES	6,513	5,760	-1.7%	

Industry Change, Hamtramck, 2001-2008 Source: Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2008; ESRI, 2009.

If we look at growth in industries for Hamtramck, we can see which industry sectors have added jobs in Hamtramck. In Hamtramck these areas include information, educational services, finance and insurance, real estate and rental and leasing, professional, scientific and technical services, and a slight increase in health care and social services industries. It is notable that the growth in jobs are predominantly in industry sectors which are less

concentrated in Hamtramck than in Wayne County. This may indicate that Hamtramck's employment base is becoming more aligned with that of Wayne County.

Looking at , we can also see which industries have lost jobs in Hamtramck. These include manufacturing, wholesale trade, construction, retail trade, other services, utilities, transportation

and warehousing, and arts, entertainment and recreation. Some of these losses are caused by the economic recession that the entire nation has undergone in the last two years, some are caused by Michigan's prolonged recession, and some of them are genuine shifts in the economic fabric that would have occurred even in a stable economy. Overall, Hamtramck lost 753 jobs, representing an 11.6 percent decline in employment over the seven year period. Comparably, the City of Detroit lost 42,635 jobs over the same period representing a decline of 12.4 percent, and Wayne County lost 172,346 jobs during the seven years, representing a decline of 19.5 percent.<sup>1</sup>

Manufacturing is the highest employer industry and also experienced the highest employment losses in Hamtramck from 2001 through 2008. Hamtramck's' manufacturing has been predominantly in the automotive sector, so the decline experienced in Hamtramck is clearly related to the decline in the American automotive industry so prevalent in the Detroit metropolitan region. Manufacturing continues to be a strong skill base for Michigan and Hamtramck workers. The production of the Chevy Volt in the Hamtramck GM plant is evidence of the capacities of Hamtramck workers. However, the recession we have recently experienced is a reminder that Michigan and the Detroit region in particular, needs to continue to diversify its industry base, while capitalizing upon the workforce's manufacturing prowess.

The decline in the retail sector is significant for the Joseph Campau corridor in particular, and other Hamtramck commercial districts in general. Of the 559 commercial properties surveyed in 2009 as a part of this planning process, 120 or 21.5 percent were vacant. These properties were scattered throughout the city, but were generally clustered on Joseph Campau, Caniff and Conant Streets. The

Source: Michigan Labor Market Information, 2009

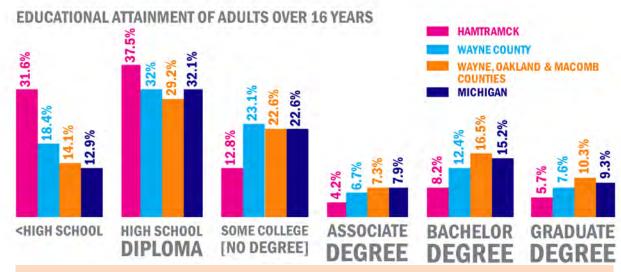
loss of these retail businesses represents significant losses in entry-level jobs, and small and start-up businesses. This loss also represents the decline of these commercial corridors as identifiable shopping districts and community gathering places.

The "other services" category is an interesting case for Hamtramck. Although it has dropped in prevalence since 2001, it is a larger category in Hamtramck than in Wayne County or the State of Michigan. The other services group includes businesses such as automotive repair, appliance repair, cleaning services and laundries, personal services such as beauty salons and barber shops, parking lots, and non-profit organizations.

It should be noted that this employment data does not include self-employed individuals, a segment of the workforce that may have experienced growth in recent years, as a community of professional artists, designers, and other creative entrepreneurs has continued to grow in Hamtramck. Additionally, interviews with residents, city employees, and officials in Hamtramck revealed a commonly accepted but undocumented truth that the informal economy is a significant phenomenon in the city, especially among Hamtramck's immigrant populations. Therefore, in addition to the many uncounted self-employed workers in Hamtramck, unlicensed businesses and sales, temporary or unreported workers, and other forms of the informal economy likely account for a significant but unquantifiable number jobs and business activity in Hamtramck.

#### Attributes of Hamtramck's Workforce

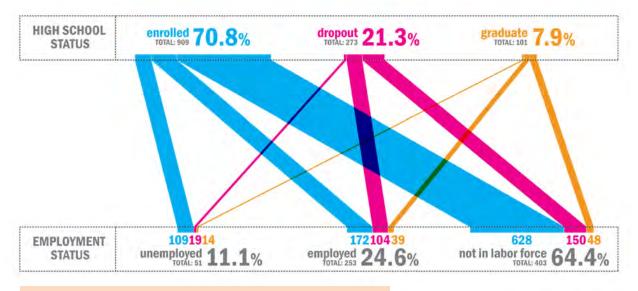
There are many characteristics of the Hamtramck population that are particularly relevant to economic development. Chief among these characteristics is the educational attainment of adults [age 16 and older] in the workforce.



Educational Attainment of Adults Over 16 Years Source: Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2008; ESRI, 2009.

#### YOUTH EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

2000 census summary file 3



Youth Education & Employment Status. Source: 2000 census summary File 3

#### > EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

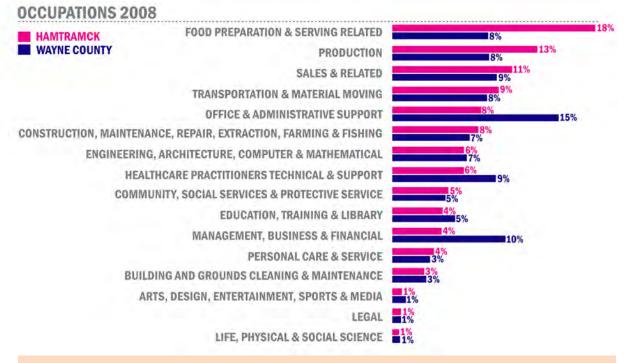
The educational attainment of adults shows the relative percentages for Hamtramck; Wayne County; Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties combined; and the State of Michigan. From the chart we can see that Hamtramck's workforce is less educated relative to the state and region. Clearly, this is a weakness that Hamtramck needs to recognize and overcome to successfully grow and diversify its economy.

When we aggregate the data on educational attainment we find that 69.1 percent of Hamtramck adults have a high school diploma or less while 50.3 percent of Wayne County residents have a high school diploma or less. Conversely, 30.1 percent of Hamtramck residents have attended or graduated any level of college compared to 49.7 percent of Wayne County residents having attended or graduated from college. This is nearly a twenty percentage point difference. Comparisons with the tri-county region and the State of Michigan are even more divergent.

#### > OCCUPATIONS

Occupational data is collected from residents, not from workplaces. Therefore the data in this section indicates the occupations of Hamtramck residents, regardless of whether they work in Hamtramck or commute to other communities for work. This information may seem to conflict with information above regarding industries in Hamtramck. The industry information is collected from workplaces, and so includes those who commute into Hamtramck as well as residents who work in the industries represented.

The most common occupations in Hamtramck are in the food preparation and serving related occupations – nearly 18 percent of all jobs reported by Hamtramck residents. In contrast, approximately eight percent of all jobs reported by Wayne County



Occupations of Hamtramck & Wayne County, 2008. Source: Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics May 2008; ESRI, 2009.

residents are in the food preparation and serving related occupations. Production occupations, sales and related occupations, and transportation and material moving occupations are also common for Hamtramck residents. Conversely, office and administrative support occupations, and management, business and financial occupations are less common for Hamtramck residents as a percentage of all occupations than in Wayne County. This aligns with what we would expect, given the lower educational attainment rates in the community.

The figure above provides the rate of change in occupation as reported by Hamtramck residents. [Again, the data does not reflect occupations in the City of Hamtramck, but rather the occupations

Hamtramck residents are engaged in, regardless of where their workplace is located.]

The occupations with positive annual change are those in which Hamtramck residents are gaining job skills and opportunity. These occupations are areas where Hamtramck is gaining expertise in its resident workforce, and therefore may also indicate industries that Hamtramck could expect some advantage in business development and recruitment.

Occupations with negative annual change are those in which Hamtramck residents have lost jobs. This information indicates occupations and industries that require careful scrutiny by the Hamtramck Department of Community and Economic

Development. The data may indicate industries which are declining on a regional or larger scale, or they may indicate local job losses. The data indicate that there are Hamtramck residents who have left an occupational field, presumably because of lack of opportunity. Although there may seem to be abundant workforce skills in these occupations, developing or attracting viable businesses in these fields may be difficult to do if the industry is declining regionally.

OCCUPATION DESCRIPTION	2005	2000	05-08 CHANGE	
OCCUPATION DESCRIPTION	2005	2008	CAGR	
Community and Social Services	112	143	8.5%	1
Office and Administrative Support	449	561	7.7%	Ly più
Life, Physical, and Social Science	35	42	6.3%	
Architecture and Engineering	231	262	4.3%	
Computer and Mathematical	164	186	4.3%	
Personal Care and Service	244	260	2.1%	
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	262	272	1.3%	
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	339	346	0.7%	1
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	3	3	0.0%	
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	201	198	-0.5%	
Legal	51	50	-0.7%	
Healthcare Support	180	176	-0.7%	
Production	961	913	-1.7%	
<b>Business and Financial Operations</b>	158	150	-1.7%	
Transportation and Material Moving	717	667	-2.4%	
Food Preparation and Serving Related	1,390	1,281	-2.7%	
Education, Training, and Library	353	314	-3.8%	
Sales and Related Occupations	854	757	-3.9%	
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	65	56	-4.8%	
Protective Service	249	211	-5.4%	
Construction and Extraction	242	194	-7.1%	4.1
Management	196	157	-7.1%	
TOTAL: ALL OCCUPATIONS	7,456	7,199	-1.2%	
IOIAL. ALL OCCUPATIONS	7,450	1,155	-1.2%	And public

Change of Occupations among Hamtramck Residents Source: Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics May 2008.

We have also examined the data for workers who travel into Hamtramck, and for those who travel out of Hamtramck, for work. From the information gleaned, we can infer that:

- > 55% of people [2,647] working in Hamtramck are residents of either Hamtramck or Detroit.
- > Over 27% [or 2,137] of employed Hamtramck residents work in Oakland County, 15% work in Hamtramck, and 40% work elsewhere in Wayne County.
- > Hamtramck has a negative net workflow of nearly 3000, while Warren, Troy, and Dearborn have a combined positive net workflow of over 50,000. Nearby cities of Southfield, Royal Oak, and Dearborn Heights have greater negative net workflows.
- > It should be noted that the data regarding commuters into and out of Hamtramck is for the year 2000. Because the Michigan economy has been in the midst of a recession for much of the past decade, this data is less reliable than would be expected in a stable economy, even for ten-year-old data.

The fluid nature of work and commuting in this urban region is evident in the data. Only 15.2% of Hamtramck residents who work do so in Hamtramck, and only 24.6% of the jobs in Hamtramck are held by Hamtramck residents. Several conclusions can be drawn:

- > Hamtramck businesses can attract employees from a diverse geography and population base.
- > Hamtramck employees have wider choices in neighborhoods and housing than a small city like Hamtramck can provide.
- > Non-resident workers in Hamtramck businesses may feel less affinity toward the city and its neighborhoods and districts than do residents. They may be less inclined to spend their wages in Hamtramck, thereby reducing the recirculation effect of Hamtramck wages.
- > Hamtramck residents who commute to work may have less time to contribute to volunteer activities and may therefore be less engaged in community organizations and causes.
- > Hamtramck residents who commute to other communities to work may spend a considerable amount of their discretionary income at businesses outside Hamtramck, depriving Hamtramck businesses of sales opportunities and depriving the city of tax revenue.
- > Local businesses with few Hamtramck residentemployees may be more likely to consider relocating out of the city, and less receptive to city requests to make property or other improvements.

Occupations of Hamtramck & Wayne County, 2008. Source: Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics May 2008; ESRI, 2009.

#### HAMTRAMCK WORKFLOW

NUMBER OF HAMTRAMCK	CHARGOS	AND DECEMBERS & CONTROL	NUMBER OF HAMTRAMCK	CHARE DE
CORRESPONDING LOCATION	SHARE OF TOTAL	CORRESPONDING LOCATION	CORRESPONDING LOCATION	SHARE OF TOTAL
1,909	24.5%	DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY	1,462	30.4%
2,137	27.4%	OTHER CITY OR TWP IN OAKLAND CO.	708	14.7%
1,200	15.4%	OTHER CITY OR TWP IN WAYNE CO.	335	7.0%
1,185	15.2%	HAMTRAMCK	1,185	24.6%
472	6.1%	OTHER CITY OR TWP IN MACOMB CO.	560	11.6%
467	6.0%	WARREN, MACOMB COUNTY	183	3.8%
300	3.8%	STERLING HEIGHTS, MACOMB COUNT	y 161	3.3%
127	1.6%	OTHER CITY OR TWP	220	4.6%

**NET WORKER FLOW HAMTRAMCK & SURROUNDING AREAS** 

ZKWEK J. EV.II	.00000000000000000000000000000000000000	IMPLIED INFLOW OF WORKERS	IMPLIED OUTFLOW OF WORKERS	NET WORKFLOW	
	WARREN	93,318	29,307	64,011	-
	TROY	85,345	29,836	55,509	
	DEARBORN	74,053	23,988	50,065	
	REDFORD TWP.	69,951	35,439	34,512	8
	LIVONIA	7,569	3,755	3,814	
	DETROIT	163,857	164,516	-659	28
	HAMTRAMCK	3,629	6,612	-2,983	18
	SOUTHFIELD	25,327	28,659	-3,332	
	ROYAL OAK	12,665	21,995	-9,330	
	DEARBORN HEIGHTS	8,370	22,561	-14,191	문

Viewing unemployment rates for Hamtramck and the surrounding region, shown below, we can infer that fewer employed Hamtramck residents are likely commuting to Detroit and Wayne County than in 2000. We can also infer that more commuters are likely traveling into Hamtramck from Detroit and Wayne County now than were in 2000 [since those localities have higher unemployment rates than does Hamtramck], although probably even more are traveling to Oakland and Macomb Counties.

#### **UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2009**



Unemployment Rates, 2009 Source: Anderson Economic Group, LLC; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics May 2008; ESRI, 2009.

# Residential And Commercial Market Conditions

#### > COMMERCIAL MARKET CONDITIONS

Because of proximity, Hamtramck's commercial and industrial markets are synonymous with those of the City of Detroit and Wayne County. Therefore, we can utilize information on the Detroit market to also evaluate Hamtramck's commercial and industrial markets. Analysis of information from both CBRE and Loopnet indicate that the prolonged recession that the Detroit region has experienced over the past several years may be bottoming out, and the period ahead may produce a slow turnaround in property vacancy. That being said, the Detroit region still has a long way to go before it can be declared "healthy" in any meaningful way. There is more than adequate supply of commercial and industrial properties available in the market. both in Wayne County and, throughout the region.

#### > OFFICE

Detroit's office market in April 2010 indicated a lease asking rate of \$18.41/sf/year for Detroit² and \$15.23/sf/year for Wayne County.³ No office properties were listed for rent in Hamtramck at the time this data was analyzed. Office properties for sale in Wayne County were available during the first quarter of 2010 for an average of \$85.00/sf. Two office properties were available for sale in Hamtramck during this period for an average sales price of \$44.11/sf.⁴ No information was available about Office Class [A, B or C], which would significantly affect the sales price; however both properties were freestanding buildings.

#### > RETAIL

Retail space was available for lease in Wayne County during the first quarter of 2010 for an average of \$12.95/sf/year.<sup>5</sup> One retail property was available for rent in Hamtramck for \$12.00/sf during this same period.<sup>6</sup> Again, comparison is dependent upon the quality of the spaces under review. Retail properties for sale in Wayne County were priced at \$75.00/sf on average. In Hamtramck two corner retail spaces were for sale during this same period for \$17.56 and \$27.50/sf. <sup>7</sup>

#### > OTHER COMMERCIAL

Although no specific information for Wayne County or Detroit is available for comparison, there were several other commercial properties available for sale in Hamtramck during this time frame. Two restaurants were listed for \$75.76/sf and \$71.56/sf respectively and four general commercial buildings, some with extensive parking lots were listed ranging from \$11.09/sf to \$90.99/sf in sales price.<sup>8</sup>

#### > INDUSTRIAL

Industrial space was available for lease during the first quarter of 2010 for an average rate of \$3.26/sf/year in Detroit<sup>9</sup>, and \$4.84/sf/year in Wayne County.<sup>10</sup> In Hamtramck, three industrial properties were available for lease during the same period for rates ranging from \$1.95/sf/year to \$3.25/sf/year.<sup>11</sup> Industrial properties for sale during the

www.CBRE.com/research, Market View; Detroit Office. First Quarter 2010. Viewed on May 24, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> www.Loopnet.com/Hamtramck\_Michigan\_Market-trends. Viewed May 21, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> http://ref.michigan.org/medc/services/sitedevelopment/site.asp. Viewed May 21, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> www.Loopnet.com/Hamtramck\_Michigan\_Market-trends. Viewed May 21, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> http://ref.michigan.org/medc/services/sitedevelopment/site.asp, Viewed May 21, 2010.

<sup>7</sup> http://ref.michigan.org/medc/services/sitedevelop-ment/site.asp. Viewed May 21, 2010.

<sup>8</sup> http://ref.michigan.org/medc/services/sitedevelopment/site.asp. Viewed May 21, 2010.

<sup>9</sup> www.CBRE.com/research, Market View; Detroit Office. First Quarter 2010. Viewed on May 24, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> www.Loopnet.com/Hamtramck\_Michigan\_Market-trends. Viewed May 21, 2010.

<sup>11</sup> http://ref.michigan.org/medc/services/sitedevelop-

same period were listed at an average of \$34.25/ sf for Wayne County. In Hamtramck, four industrial properties were for sale ranging from \$7.18/sf to \$150.00/sf.<sup>12</sup>

#### > RESIDENTIAL MARKET CONDITIONS

Hamtramck's neighborhoods are composed of densely built urban homes. The 2000 U.S. Census counted 8,894 housing units, and projected a 0.2% increase between 2000 and 2009 to give a total housing units value in 2009 of 9,027. The projection for 2014 is 9,034 which is an annual increase of less than 0.01%. This compares with Detroit, which has growth rates of 0.1% for 2009, and 0.0% for 2014, and Wayne County where growth rates are estimated at 0.3% for 2009, and projected at 0.1% for 2014. It should be noted that these projections were cast prior to Detroit's recently announced plans to progressively demolish large tracts of vacant housing. The plans to demolish vacant housing on a large scale would be expected to reduce the growth rate into the negative range.

Hamtramck's housing stock is aging: the median year built for Hamtramck housing is 1940. Comparing with the surrounding neighborhoods, we find that Detroit's median year built of housing is 1948, and Wayne County's median year of housing built is 1954. Remembering that the late 1940s and the '50s were a time of dramatic change in new housing architecture, we realize that this has a significant effect on the choices of housing available in Hamtramck.

Hamtramck's housing stock is also increasingly vacant, although at a lesser rate than that of Detroit. Hamtramck's vacancy rate in 2009 was estimated to be 15.0% and in 2014 is projected to be 17.7%. This is less than in Detroit [19.5% in 2009 and

23.2% in 2014] and greater than in Wayne County [13.2% in 2009 and 16.1% in 2014] and the state as a whole [14.1% in 2009 and 14.8% in 2014].

Compared with other locations in the region, Hamtramck has a higher rate of renter occupancy. In 2009 it was estimated that rental occupancy accounted for 43.7% of Hamtramck's housing units. This figure is projected to be 43.4% in 2014. In Detroit, the rental occupancy rate is estimated at 37.2% for 2009 and projected to be 35.9% in 2014. Wayne County was estimated to have a residential rental occupancy rate of 29.1% in 2009, projected to drop to 28.3% in 2014. The State of Michigan as a whole is estimated to have had a rental occupancy rate of 22.6% in 2009, and projected to have a rental occupancy rate of 22.5% in 2014.

Housing values in Hamtramck lie between that of Detroit and Wayne County. Hamtramck's median home value in 2009 was estimated to be \$68,027, while that of Detroit was \$59,268, and in Wayne County it was \$88,343. In 2014 the median home values are projected to be \$68,143 in Hamtramck, \$59,493 in Detroit, and \$88,914 in Wayne County.

Rents in Hamtramck are generally lower than those in surrounding communities. The median contract rent in 2000 was \$378 in Hamtramck, \$383 in Detroit, \$428 in Wayne County and \$426 in the State of Michigan.

As with the commercial property market, there is currently excess supply of housing in the region, which will keep prices low for the coming years. Hamtramck's housing supply is older than that of the surrounding region, which limits choice, especially for upper income families. In the longer term, as the current housing glut resolves, Hamtramck should develop and implement a strategy to increase its housing choices.

#### > AGENTS OF ECONOMIC AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Land assembly has been one of the biggest hurdles to development in Hamtramck. Big plots of land, what typical developers look for, do not exist in Hamtramck, or if they do they require costly environmental remediation. The housing discrimination lawsuit has also hampered development by freezing the disposition of cityowned property until the required housing units are built. With funding in place for the remaining 104 housing units, the fulfillment of the lawsuit requirements is within sight and this longstanding stumbling block will finally be removed. Nevertheless, with land a scarcity, redevelopment in Hamtramck tends to be reuse in contrast to Detroit where vacant land is abundant and developers have plenty of opportunity to start from scratch. Development in the City is spurred by tax increment financing [TIF] funding mechanisms. brownfield redevelopment incentives, and the full range of State incentives.

#### **City Agencies**

Development in the City is assisted by the technical and financial support of the following agencies:

# > DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Development Director is also the Planning Director and oversees the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Commission.

#### > DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY [DDA]

The DDA is a business improvement district that covers the length of Campau Street. The Downtown Tax Increment Financing District provides the funding mechanism for the DDA's budget.

#### > ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION [EDC]

The EDC was established in 2007 to assist development projects with financing. The EDC can bond for initiatives and is eligible for initiatives beyond the scope of the DDA.

ment/site.asp. Viewed May 21, 2010.

12 http://ref.michigan.org/medc/services/sitedevelop-ment/site.asp. Viewed May 21, 2010.

#### > BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY [BRA]

The BRA was established after the EDC with similar functions and goals to focus specifically on redeveloping environmentally contaminated sites. The EDC and BRA share board members and meet consecutively.

#### **DDA Tax Increment Financing**

The Downtown Tax Increment Financing District covers properties along Campau from Carpenter to Denton, not including the shopping center at Holbrook. Of the roughly 300 buildings on Campau, about 170+ businesses are in operation and there is a vacancy rate of about 40%. The DDA was established in 1981 to revitalize downtown Hamtramck along Jos. Campau and a TIF was created in 1997. The DDA was dissolved in 2001 by the emergency financial manager and the Tax Increment Financing [TIF] district was eliminated. The DDA managed the federal economic development grant of \$2.2 million for the streetscape between Caniff and Holbrook between 2000 and 2001, a project which was taken over by the emergency financial manager's staff.

In 2005, the DDA was reinstated and the TIF district was reset. As a result, funding was significantly reduced, with a current budget of approximately \$80,000. TIF funds have been used for brownfield projects, and have been approved for scattered site housing as part of the R- settlement and the Shopper's World site. The DDA includes committees to oversee marketing and promotions, façade and public safety, streetscape and parking, recruitment and retention. The DDA's façade improvement program was recently expanded to include any commercial property in the City, and CDBG funds increased to \$75,000 annually. The City will provide a match of up to 75% for buildings that are restored to their original storefront design.



Approximated DDA Districts. Source: Interface Studio.

# DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS

- DDA District outside TIF Boundary
- DDA District within Downtown Tax Increment Financing District

#### **Brownfields**

Brownfield redevelopment incentives are an important tool for the City's development strategy. At the federal level, energy-efficient tax credits are going to brownfields over greenfields. In April of 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] awarded the City of Hamtramck and co-applicant the Detroit-Wayne County Port Authority a \$1,000,000.00 grant to create a revolving loan fund to distribute grants and loans to redevelopment projects that need funding to assist with clean up costs. Over the last two years, the City has also received \$400,000 in brownfield assessment grants from the U.S. EPA. These grants are utilized for funding environmental due diligence work required in property transactions in the Hamtramck. About 50 commercial and residential properties have undergone assessments.

The City is actively marketing five opportunity sites eligible for brownfield grant funding: the former BASF site [1800 Caniff], the former Sherwin Williams site [Denton St/DCX Railroad], the former Shoppers World and the adjacent parking lot [9800 Campau], the former Al Deeby Dodge dealership [11500 Campau], and the former Omni Properties [3901 Christopher].

#### **Incentives To Economic Development**

The City of Hamtramck is designated a "Core Community" by the State of Michigan and development projects located in the City are eligible for virtually all incentives offered in the State, including the following:

#### Commercial

PA – 198 INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES TAX EXEMPTION Up to 12 year tax exemption on qualified investment.

MICHIGAN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY [MEGA INCENTIVE]

Up to 20 year Michigan Business Tax [MBT] credit.

PA- 328 PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT
Up to a full abatement on qualifying personal property taxes.

#### WAYNE COUNTY TURBO

1st year/construction tax free. 5 year, 50 % tax reimbursement.

WAYNE COUNTY NEW MARKET TAX CREDITS the County recently received a \$50M allocation

BROWNFIELD – MBT CREDIT [up to 20% credit for urban projects]

# BROWNFIELD TAX INCREMENT FINANCING [TIF] REIMBURSEMENT

repayment to developer for eligible costs [demolition, infrastructure, etc.]

### ENERGY EFFICIENCY CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANTS [FECRG]

funding to assist in implementing energy efficiency in building restoration and construction

#### **DETROIT MICRO-ENTERPRISE FUND**

lends up to \$10,000 to start-ups and up to \$25,000 for established businesses.

#### Residential

MICHIGAN NEIGHBORHOOD ENTERPRISE ZONE [NEZ] up to 15 year tax reduction. Residents pay a millage rate equal to 50% of the statewide average.

#### WAYNE COUNTY TURBO

1st year/construction tax free. 5 year, 50 % tax reimbursement.

WAYNE COUNTY NEW MARKET TAX CREDITS the County recently received a \$50M allocation

BROWNFIELD – MBT CREDIT [up to 20% credit for urban projects]

# BROWNFIELD TAX INCREMENT FINANCING [TIF] REIMBURSEMENT

repayment to developer for eligible costs [demolition, infrastructure, etc.]

OPRA – OBSOLETE PROPERTY REHABILITATION ACT 15 year tax abatement on real property.

FEDERAL/STATE SINGLE SITE HISTORIC TAX CREDITS up to 40% tax credit.

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANTS [FFCBG]

funding to assist in implementing energy efficiency in building restoration and construction.

WAYNE COUNTY WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM funding to addresses energy efficiency in existing homes.

# CITY OF HAMTRAMCK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT HOUSING REHABILITATION

funding to address emergency home repairs, and to make home improvements bring existing homes up to code

MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY [MSHDA] LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT awarded at 5% or 9%

#### **Industrial**

PA – 198 INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES TAX EXEMPTION up to 12 year tax exemption on qualified investment.

PA- 328 PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT up to a full abatement on qualifying personal property taxes.

MICHIGAN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY [MEGA INCENTIVE]

up to 20 year Michigan Business Tax [MBT] credit.

#### HI-TECH MEGA

MBT credit for businesses creating HI-tech jobs and/or products.

MICHIGAN ADVANCE BATTERY MANUFACTURING CREDITS reimbursable tax credits for battery manufacturers locating in Michigan.

MICHIGAN EDJT – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT JOB TRAINING GRANTS

#### WAYNE COUNTY TURBO

1st year/construction tax free. 5 year, 50 % tax reimbursement.

WAYNE COUNTY NEW MARKET TAX CREDITS the County recently received a \$50M allocation.

BROWNFIELD – MBT CREDIT [up to 20% credit for urban projects].

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repayment to developer for eligible costs [demolition, infrastructure, etc.]

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANTS [FFCBG]

funding to assist in implementing energy efficiency in building restoration and construction.

#### **DETROIT MICRO-ENTERPRISE FUND**

lends up to \$10,000 to start-ups and up to \$25,000 for established businesses.

#### New & Recent Development

Limited land, financing and the R31 lawsuit have frustrated development in Hamtramck over the years. Nevertheless, several major projects have recently been completed or are well on their way, and are expected to bring investment, jobs and services to the City. Although a full economic recovery is still in the wings and financing is hard to come by, several projects are planned and set to move forward.

#### > Projects on line:

- > The Michigan State Department of Human Services opened in February 2010 on the site of the former Woody Pontiac dealership on Jos. Campau Street. The 30,000-square-foot center is expected to become a hub of activity, with more than 100 employees and serving several hundred people each day, that will support surrounding businesses and spur new development. Redevelopment of the site was aided by a MSHDA Cities of Promise grant, Michigan business tax credit, and brownfield tax credits, which enabled the developer, Boji Group, to demolish blighted buildings in December 2008.
- > The Arab American and Chaldean Council opened a new center at 9019 Jos. Campau to serve Hamtramck residents. The center provides job training, youth programs, WIC, and DHS social services.
- > The North Detroit Hospital complex on Carpenter is being renovated as a charter high school. The project will also include medical suites, a senior assisted living complex, and a senior community center. They have building permits on the Detroit side of Carpenter and have started some construction.

#### > Projects on deck:

- > Green Power Technology, a refuse processing company, is applying for Department of Energy grants to renovate the Missant site.
- >The Hausner Building at Jos. Campau and Belmont, is being redeveloped for offices, residential lofts, and Flavors Restaurant on the ground floor.
- > The former Citizen building will combine office and residential space.
- > The Mitchell Street Town Homes project is working to secure financing and incentives.
- > Hamtramck Historical Museum is being planned in the former Polish League of American Veterans Post One building on Holbrook.



New & Recent Development. Source: Interface Studio.

#### **SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

The economic and market information presented illustrates the current conditions that need to be considered in planning for Hamtramck's future. In summary the data reveals the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats:

#### Strengths

- > Cultural and ethnic diversity.
- > Reputation as a culturally unique community.
- > Growing artistic class.
- > Good cultural and community events.
- > Strong industrial property and workforce assets.
- > Progressive, technological industries within or nearby the community.
- > Rail access to most industrial properties and good access to regional, national and international transport facilities.
- > Adequate supply of affordable commercial and industrial properties.
- > Several excellent educational institutions are within commuting range.
- > Good career development resources are within commuting range.
- > A dense, walkable built environment.
- > Affordable homes.

#### **Opportunities**

- > Develop new industries and career options through ethnic, cultural and artistic assets.
- > Encourage and support small business development and entrepreneurship, especially in foreign born and first generation communities.
- > Diversify the employment and industry composition of the community, especially in the community's growth industries such as information, educational services, finance and insurance, and professional, scientific and technical services.
- > Capitalize on the production of the GM Volt to encourage more "green" technologies in Hamtramck.
- > Rehabilitate and improve retail districts and diversify retail and entertainment offerings.
- > Develop social and political capital through inclusion and leadership training, especially in the immigrant and first generation communities.
- > Expand the community's regional reputation beyond Polish culture to include the cultures of more recent immigrant and first generation communities.

#### Weaknesses

- > Low educational attainment rates.
- > Relatively few transit choices.
- Non-descript, deteriorating retail districts.
- > Aging and underutilized industrial districts.
- > Lack of upper-income neighborhoods reduces the incentives for commerce and industry leadership to reside in Hamtramck and contribute to the social, political, and knowledge capital of the community.
- > Lack of prominence of economic development in the city's leadership and community outreach.
- > Low level of organizational capital in the retail districts.

#### Challenges/Constraints

- > Aging public and private built environment with higher rehabilitation and replacement costs relative to suburban areas.
- > Costs and challenges of competing with neighboring communities for growing industries and commercial development.
- > Cost and challenge of balancing cultural and ethnic diversity of the foreign born population with assimilation into American business and society.
- > Providing educational and career preparation opportunities that meet the demands of the fast changing workplace.

#### **SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS**

#### Strengths

- > Safety: Hamtramck feels like an oasis in Detroit
- > Village character: density; walkability; "good bones"; not designed for the automobile
- > "You get an urban environment in a small town... so everybody knows each other but we have lofts, we have galleries, we have shops—we have most things you would associate with being "urban."
- > Easy access to I-75 and I-94, international airport and rail system
- > Endurance: less visible indicators of abandonment than what is seen in Detroit
- > "This is the only place you can come back to, find your house and people are still living in it. You can find your church, friends and where you bought your paczki's. This is not true in Detroit."
- > Affordability
- > Small, locally-owned businesses
- > Creative community
- > Unique identity
- > "Hamtramck doesn't need to come back, it's already here and we just need to bring it out more. There's a lot of kick left in it."
- > Local destinations: bars and culturally-specific food and shopping draws
- > We are a town that is known for our music festivals, our ethnic festivals, our bars, our food.
- > Well-attended events
- > Access to food, especially fresh fruits and vegetables, in the midst of the "food deserts" of Detroit
- > Strength of community
- > "The only reason that Hamtramck has survived at all is because of the sense of community."

#### Weaknesses

- > Public transportation options
- > Arts scene as a destination
- > Perception of the quality of education
- > Effects of industry and infrastructure on property values, neighborhood character, and the public realm
- > Street chaos: many accidents, no bike infrastructure, disregard for traffic laws
- > Public realm basics: maintenance of streets, sewer and stormwater infrastructure
- > Disconnect between the community and the city government
- > Tree cover and green sensibilities [impervious surfaces, etc.]
- > Commercial vacancy, struggling commercial corridor, and retail leakage
- > Perception [or lack of awareness] of Hamtramck from surrounding communities
- > "I think there's an enormous amount of misconception about Hamtramck...people came from Rochester Hills for Labor Day and were like 'I can't believe Hamtramck is like this! I thought it was the ghetto!"
- > Residential leakage: deterrents to long-term residency include crime, local schools and higher costs compared with suburbs.
- > Every time the community changes, you lose some of the connections. There's too much turnover.

#### **Opportunities**

- > Uniqueness and identity
- > Greater flexibility in community and economic development with resolution of the R31 issue; potentially more room in the budget for public realm, civic services, and local infrastructure improvements
- > Bigger planning initiatives Hamtramck could tap into such as mass transportation, bike routes, etc.
- > Detroit suffers from "brain drain," but Hamtramck has a chance to retain educated residents
- > Connections/proximity to waterfront amenities, Wayne State, Canada

#### Challenges/Constraints

- > Industrial development within close proximity of residential neighborhoods
- > Language barrier; cultural misunderstandings
- > Small government with questionable capacity given current staffing
- > Perception: those who really know Hamtramck know that it's a great place to raise a family, but residents of wealthier suburbs in the Detroit area [who might otherwise be a good draw for visitor destinations in Hamtramck] either assume that Hamtramck is ghetto or simply don't know it exists
- > Residential leakage: Hamtramck has a solid population of lifetime residents and families who have lived here for many generations, but it also fails to retain much of its new resident population. People move away to other cities [typically Warren, Sterling Heights, and Troy] as soon as they can afford to do so for better schools and other quality of life concerns.
- > Local budget constraints and the struggling larger economy

# **EXISTING CONDITIONS UPDATE 2020**

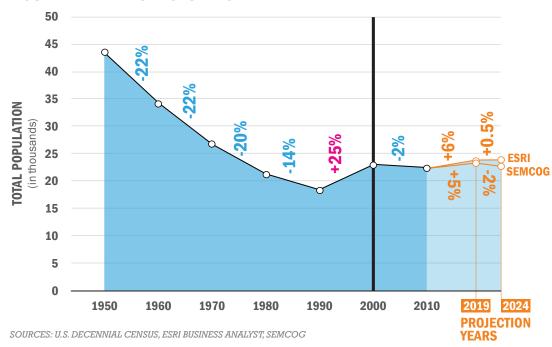
#### **DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

#### **Population Change**

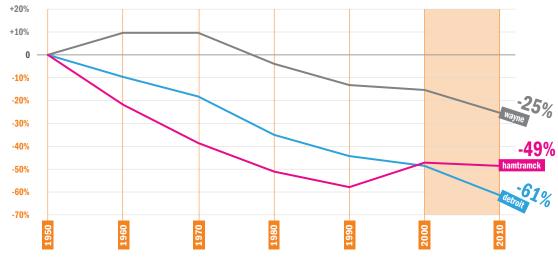
According to the U.S. Census, the 2010 population was 22,423, a slight decrease by 2.41% from the 2000 Census. The Southeastern Council of Governments (SEMCOG) estimates that the 2019 Hamtramck population is 23,463, a 5% increase from 2010, and that the 2024 population is 22,879, a 2% increase from 2010. Slightly more optimistic, ESRI Business Analyst predicts that the 2019 Hamtramck population is 23,772, a 6% increase from 2010, and that the 2024 population is 23,882, a 7% increase from the 2010. The population estimates from both sources, however, are merely predictions. For instance, the SEMCOG estimates from 2000 predicted nearly a 16% population increase by 2009, whereas, in reality, the population decreased by over 2%.

Hamtramck's population peaked in 1950. Between 1950 and 1990, there was a steady population decline, though there was a shift between 1990 and 2000 with a 25% population increase. Since this sudden increase in the last decade of the 20th century, however, Hamtramck's population has leveled off, if not decreased ever so slightly. During the 60 years between 1950 and 2010, Hamtramck's population declined by 49%. This is noticeably less than Detroit's 61% population loss, though noticeably more than Wayne County's 25% population decline. This difference amongst the cities and county supports the trend of city dwellers moving to suburbs within the county and region.

#### FIGURE: HAMTRAMCK POPULATION



#### FIGURE: PERCENT POPULATION CHANGE SINCE 1950



SOURCE: U.S. DECENNIAL CENSUS

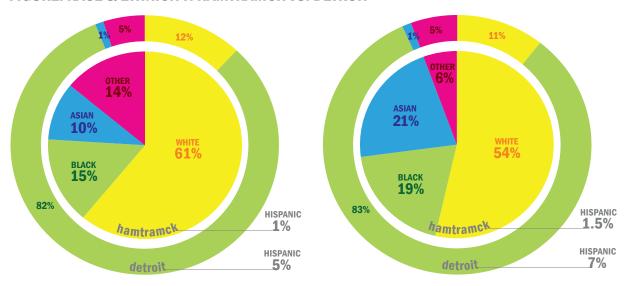
#### Race and Ethnicity

The racial composition of Hamtramck remains distinctly different than that of Detroit. Detroit's population continues steadily to be majority African American (82% in 2000 and 83% in 2010), with the 17% remainder of the population in 2010 consisting of small percentages of white (11%), Asian (5%), and other (1%) races and ethnicities. Conversely, Hamtramck continues to be much more diverse. Between 2000 and 2010, the white population decreased from 61% to 54%, while the African American and Asian populations grew noticeably during this decade, especially the Asian population. In this single decade, the Asian population more than doubled in percentage points (10% in 2000 to 21% in 2010). This change in racial and ethnic composition shows the continued trend of immigration to Hamtramck, further supporting the diverse community. With the increasing Asian population, however, the "other" population decreased significantly (14% in 2000 to 6% in 2010). While Hamtramck certainly remains racially and ethnically diverse, especially compared to Detroit, the number of different types of races and ethnicities is decreasing.

#### **Immigration and Ancestry**

As of 2017 estimates, the percentage of foreignborn residents has remained consistent at 42% since the 2000 Census (41%). The citizenry status of the foreign-born population, however, has changed significantly since 2000. Now, 20% of foreign-born residents are citizens and 22% are non-citizens, whereas in 2000, only 11% of foreign-born residents were citizens and 30% were non-citizens. It is also important to note, however, that citizenry status is currently highly contentious and politically charged issue in the United States, so ACS estimates may not reflect the greatest accuracy.

#### FIGURE: RACE & ETHNICITY: HAMTRAMCK VS. DETROIT

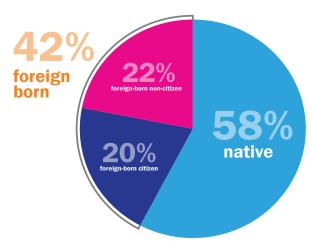


2010

SOURCES: 2000 & 2010 DECENNIAL CENSUS, TABLE DP-01

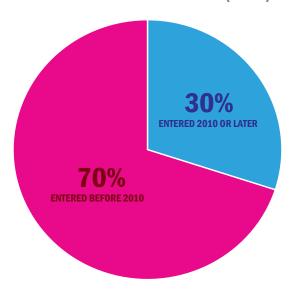
2000

#### FIGURE: HAMTRAMCK FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION



SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

#### FIGURE: YEAR OF ENTRY FOR FOREIGN-BORN HAMTRAMCK RESIDENTS (2017)



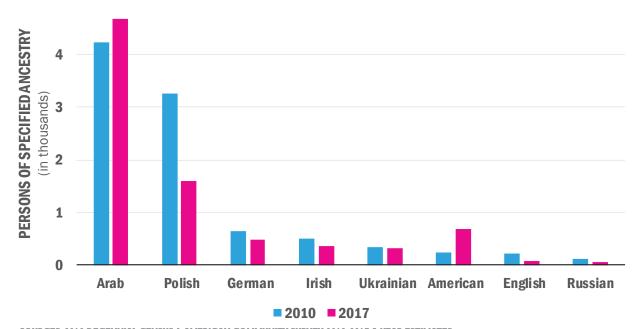
SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

# Originally, Hamtramck was almost an entirely Polish town. Between 2010 and 2017, the number of residents with Polish ancestry continued to decrease with the City losing over half (51%) of its Polish residents. Meanwhile, the number of persons with Arab ancestry and American ancestry increased, and residents of Arab ancestry now make up the largest descent group in Hamtramck. Immigrants from numerous descents, however, continue to flock to Hamtramck, as an estimated 30% of the foreign-born population in 2017 entered

The 2000 Census revealed an emerging trend of foreign-born residents coming from Bosnia-Herzegovina (23%), Bangladesh (20%), and

the City in 2010 or later.

#### FIGURE: HAMTRAMCK ANCESTRY, 2010-2017



SOURCES: 2010 DECENNIAL CENSUS & AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

Western Asia (16%) instead of the historic predominance of foreign-born residents coming from Poland. 2017 estimates show a continuation of these new places of birth for the foreign-born population, though more drastically so - 41% of foreign-born residents now come from Bangladesh. 34% come from Yemen, and 7% come from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The number of foreignborn residents from Bangladesh has more than doubled in percentage points since 2000, and the number of foreign-born residents from Western Asia (Yemen) has also more than doubled in percentage points. This trend supports the recent change in racial and ethnic diversity in Hamtramck, with more Asian residents and fewer residents categorized as "other." With this new influx of residents from

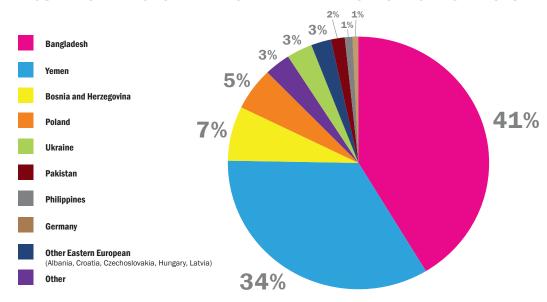
Bangladesh and Yemen, it is also important to recognize the cultures and languages that this population brings to Hamtramck, as well as the services that this community may require.

Linguistic diversity has become even more predominant in Hamtramck since 2000. As of 2017 estimates, only 33% of households speak English only at home, whereas in 2000, almost half (47%) of households spoke only English at home. 36% of households speak an Indo-European language at home, making it the most predominant type of household language, and 29% of households speak some other language. Very small proportions of the population speak Spanish (1%) or Asian and Pacific Islander (1%). In 2000,

the Hamtramck community cited language barriers as one of the primary difficulties in bridging the gap amongst the various communities within the City. With even more linguistic diversity than there was in 2000, language barriers will continue to be a primary difficulty in Hamtramck. Seeking ways to address these barriers should be a priority.

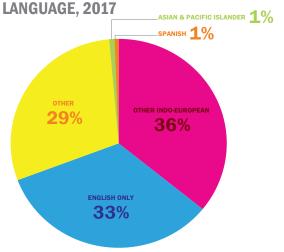
Even though the City of Hamtramck is surrounded by the City of Detroit, the difference in household languages is astounding. While almost all households speak only English in Detroit (91% in 2010 and 89% in 2017), about one-third of households speak only English at home in Hamtramck, and this percentage is decreasing (45% in 2010 and 33% in 2017). Detroit does, however, have a rising Hispanic/Latino population, so the number of households speaking Spanish at home is increasing in Detroit. While Hamtramck is certainly diverse in race and ethnicity, it does not seem to draw a large Hispanic/Latino population.

#### FIGURE: 2017 PLACE OF BIRTH FOR THE HAMTRAMCK FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION



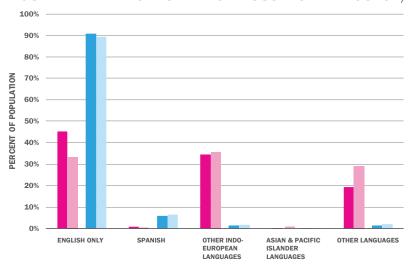
SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

# FIGURE: HAMTRAMCK HOUSEHOLD



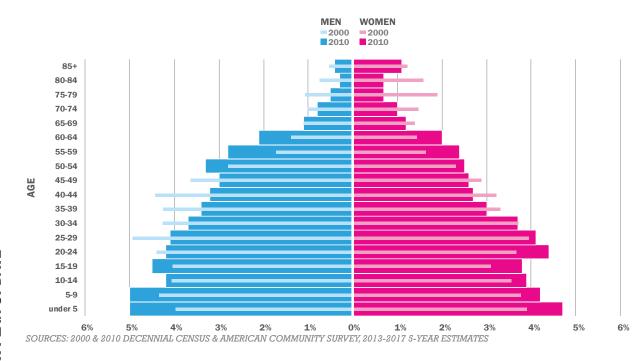
SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

#### FIGURE: HAMTRAMCK VS. DETROIT HOUSEHOLD LANGUAGE, 2010-2017



SOURCES: 2010 DECENNIAL CENSUS & AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

#### FIGURE: HAMTRAMCK AGE & SEX

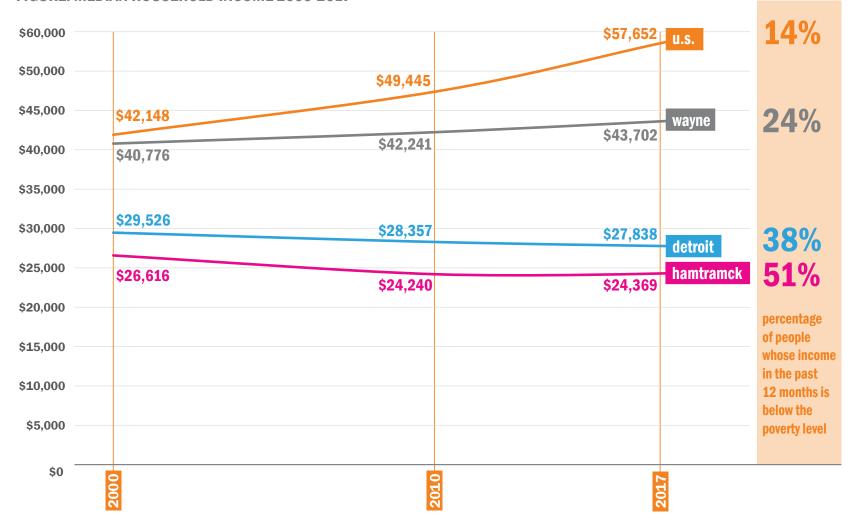


#### Age, Sex and Income

The 2010 Census shows a marked change in population age and sex from the 2000 Census. The population pyramid shows this change with the 2000 Census data in narrow, lightly shaded bars. and the 2010 data in wide, darkly shaded bars. The 2010 population pyramid is less top-heavy. showing an increase in younger ages. Now more than one-third (35%) of the population is under the age of 19, whereas in 2000, the fact that less than one-third of the population was under 19 was a concern. There has also been a decrease in both males and females in the 25-50 age range. indicating that people within these age brackets are leaving the community. Another noticeable change since 2000 is the decrease in the elderly population, signifying that the previously large older population is dying off.

As of 2017 estimates, the median household incomes in Hamtramck is \$24,369, lower than both Detroit (\$27,838), Wayne County (\$43,702), and the U.S. (\$57,652). Since 2000, the number of people in Hamtramck whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty line has essentially doubled in percentage points. In 2000, 27% of Hamtramck residents lived below the poverty line. whereas in 2017, an estimated 51% live below the poverty line. This is a drastic increase is supported by the fact that the median household income in Hamtramck has remained almost the same over two decades. It is notable that the number of Hamtramck residents living below the poverty line is significantly higher than both Detroit and Wayne County, though this number has also increased for both Detroit (26% in 2000 to 38% in 2010) and Wayne County (16% in 2000 to 24% in 2010). Compared to the national average of 14%, the number of Hamtramck residents living below the poverty line is astounding.

#### FIGURE: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME 2000-2017



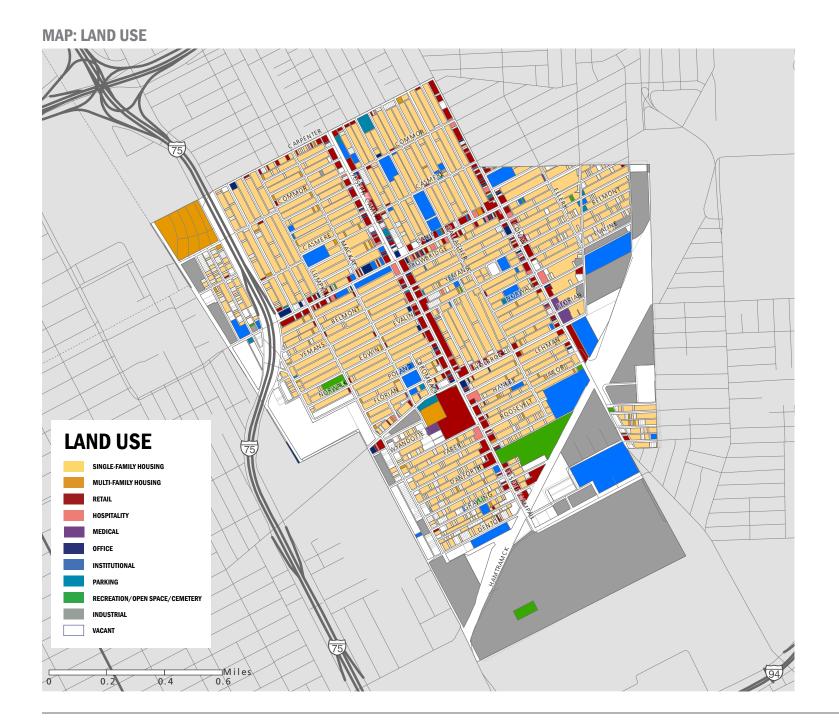
 $SOURCES: 2000 \&\ 2010\ DECENNIAL\ CENSUS\ \&\ AMERICAN\ COMMUNITY\ SURVEY, 2013-2017\ 5-YEAR\ ESTIMATES$ 

The rapidly increasing poverty level in Hamtramck is a major concern for the City going forward, because it signifies that over half of the population is likely in need of additional services. The language and cultural barriers with the foreign-born population present an additional challenge with low incomes because it makes it even more difficult for this segment of the population to bring itself out of poverty. The City and its partners must recognize this cyclical and increasing phenomenon and provide the resources and services to its highly vulnerable population.

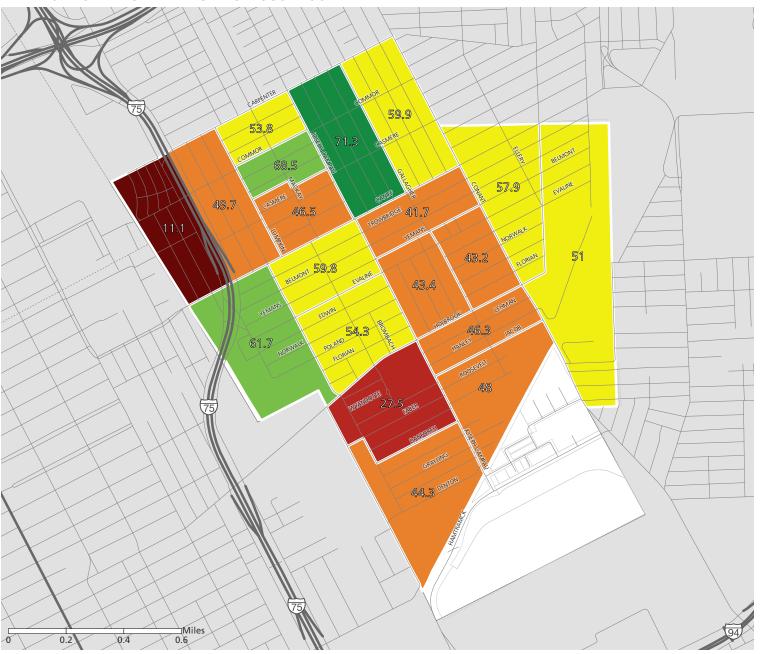
#### **LAND USE & ZONING**

#### Land Use

The land use map shows that land use within Hamtramck has remained much the same over the past two decades. The City is still predominantly residential in character with commercial corridors along Campau, Conant and Caniff, and larger industrial parcels surrounding the outside of the City. Since 2009, there has been a transition to a few more institutional land uses, notably on the southeast side of the City near the railroad, and an increase in the number of vacant parcels. While Hamtramck remains a dense area, the increase in vacancies, especially in larger industrial parcles, is quite noticable.



# MAP: HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES BY CENSUS BLOCK



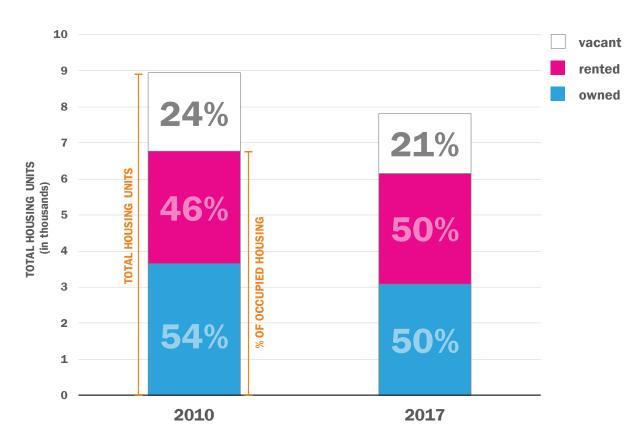
#### **HOUSING**

#### Vacancy and Tenure Trends

The homeownership rates in Hamtramck have remained guite consistent over that past 70 years. The homeownership rate was 48% in 1950, 54% in 1980, 50% in 2000, 54% in 2010, and back to an estimated 50% in 2017. Over the same time period, however, the vacancy rate has increased substantially from 1% in 1950 to an estimated 21% in 2017. The increase in vacancies between 2000 and 2017 is especially notable as the vacancy rate went from 10% in 2000 up to 24% in 2010, and then back down slightly to 21% in 2017. This sharp increase in vacancies is likely a result of the national mortgage crisis of the early 2000s. Unlike many communities throughout the United States, however, it is interesting to note that the homeownership rate remained almost the same throughout the mortgage crisis, despite the increase in vacant units.

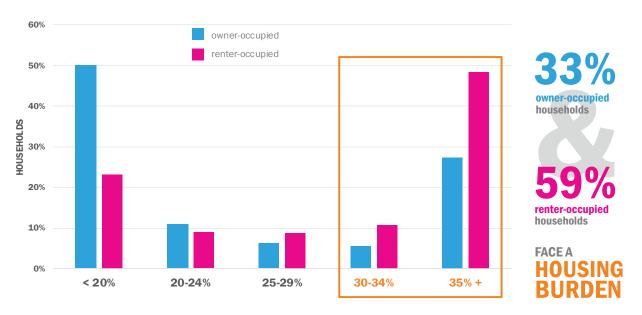
While homeownership rates overall have remained much the same over the past two decades, the distribution by Census block has changed somewhat. The highest rates of homeownership remain in the northeast and mid-southwest blocks of the City, and the lowest rates remain west of I-75. Homeownership rates in the remainder of the City have fluctuated more, especially notable on the east and south sides of the City with higher ownership rates and in the middle of the City with lower ownership rates.

#### FIGURE: HAMTRAMCK HOUSING VACANCY & HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES, 2010-2017



SOURCES: 2010 DECENNIAL CENSUS & AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

#### FIGURE: HAMTRAMCK HOUSING VACANCY & HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES, 2010-2017



SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

#### **Affordability**

Consistent with the increasing number of Hamtramck residents living below the poverty level, the number of Hamtramck households facing a housing burden has increased drastically since 2000. Households are considered "burdened" when they are spending over 30% of their income on housing costs. As of 2017 estimates, 33% of owner-occupied households face a housing burden, compared to only 22% in 2000. The sharper increase, however, is in the renter-occupied households. 59% of renter-occupied households now face a housing burden, compared to 36% in 2000. This drastic change in affordability marks

a shift for Hamtramck. Once a very affordable city, Hamtramck is becoming less affordable, even though monthly rent payments remain lower than surrounding communities. As of 2017 estimates, the median gross rent in Hamtramck is \$672 per month, where it is \$773 per month in Detroit and \$826 per month in Wayne County. It is interesting to note, however, that even though rent costs are lower in Hamtramck, 59% of renters are cost-burdened, further illustrating the low-income levels within the City. Increasing housing costs and increasing poverty levels do not make a good combination and providing more affordable housing options can only benefit the Hamtramck community.

#### **Housing Conditions & Formats**

There has been very little residential construction in Hamtramck in the past few decades. 54% of Hamtramck's housing was built before 1939, and a total of 11 housing units have been built since 2014. An aging housing stock is often difficult to maintain in quality condition, and this is a continuing struggle for the City. Considering that there has been a sharp increase in both the number of Hamtramck residents living below the poverty line and the number of cost-burdened households, it will likely be more difficult for homeowners and renters alike to adequately maintain an aging housing stock.

# FIGURE: 2010 AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE







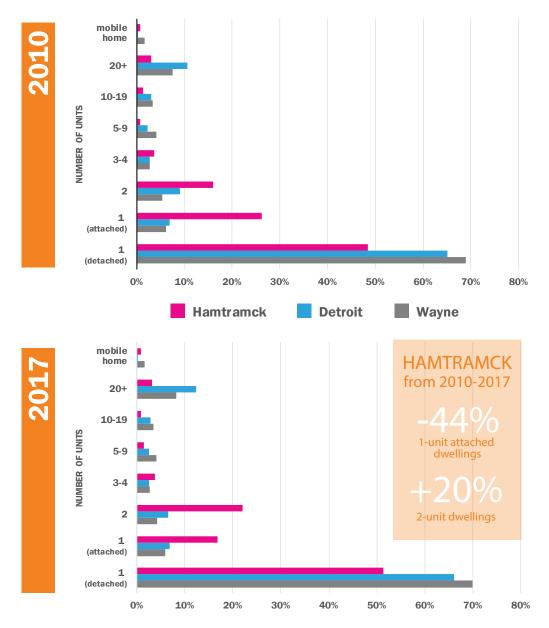
SOURCE: 2010 DECENNIAL CENSUS

#### FIGURE: YEAR BUILT FOR CURRENT HOUSING UNITS (2017)



SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

# FIGURE: HOUSING FORMAT CHANGE 2010-2017



SOURCES: 2010 DECENNIAL CENSUS & AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

Hamtramck has a more diverse set of housing formats than both Detroit and Wayne County. Compared to both Detroit and Wayne County, Hamtramck has more than double the number of 1-unit attached dwellings and 2-unit dwellings. Between 2010 and 2017, there was a 44% decrease in the number of 1-unit attached dwellings in Hamtramck, while there was a 20% increase in the number of 2-unit dwellings. Because there has been minimal residential construction, this change reflects the conversion of 1-unit attached dwellings into 2-unit dwellings. This change is certainly a more efficient use of space and increases residential density. Hamtramck, however, has a noticeably larger average household size (3.09) than larger geographies (2.56 in Wayne County and 2.49 in the State of Michigan); therefore, some households may be overcrowded in these reduced housing units.

The R31 lawsuit remains the longest-running housing discrimination case in the U.S.¹ By 2010, the City of Hamtramck had completed roughly half of the 200 housing units. Due to lack of funding, work on the remained units stalled again, and the 200 housing units remain to be completed. Additionally, the case reappeared in court in 2017 with claims of discriminatory tax assessment practices toward African American homeowners. As of 2019, the case is still pending.²

# **TRANSPORTATION**

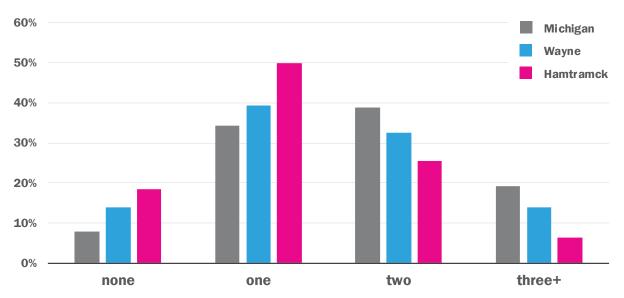
# Vehicular

As of 2017 estimates, just over 18% of households do not have a vehicle available. This shows very little change since 2000 where 20% of households did not have a vehicle available. Compared to Wayne County and the State of Michigan, Hamtramck has more households without a vehicle and with one vehicle, and fewer households with two vehicles and with three or more vehicles. Despite the lower car ownership rates in Hamtramck, 88% of working adults commute to work by motor vehicle (69% driving alone and 18% carpooling), leaving only 4% of working adults commuting by public transportation and 3% walking. The remaining 6% of workers either commute by other means (2%) or work at home (4%).

# **Street Condition**

Based on SEMCOG's most recent pavement condition ratings from 2018, the street conditions in Hamtramck have gotten worse. SEMCOG evaluates only the major streets in Hamtramck and does not evaluate side streets. Since the windshield survey completed during the last master plan effort, Carpenter Street, Caniff Street, Denton Avenue, Saint Aubin Boulevard, and Buffalo Street have all deteriorated from either good or fair quality to poor quality. Dequindre Street has deteriorated from fair to poor quality, and I-75 at the Hamtramck exit is now fair and poor quality instead of the previously designated good quality. Thus, nearly all main corridors within the City are now in poor condition.

# FIGURE: VEHICLES AVAILABLE PER HOUSEHOLD



SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

# **Public Transportation**

The Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) and the Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) continues to serve Hamtramck for public transportation. SMART now offers a connector service, Monday thru Friday from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm. This service offers curb-to-curb, advance reservation service within a 10-mile radius of a rider's beginning destination.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, SMART provides a free shuttle bus service during the Hamtramck Music Festival, an annual local event that began in 2014.

As of January 2019, there are now five DDOT bus lines that run through Hamtramck city limits, including three neighborhood routes (12, 40, 52),

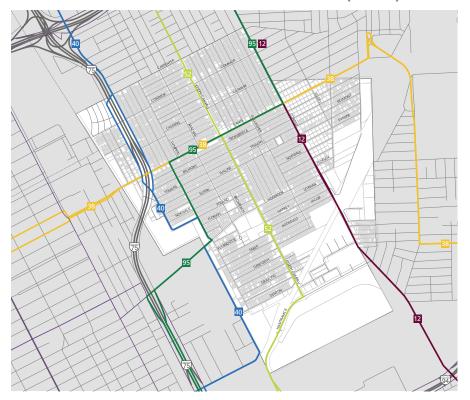
one key route (38), and one peak hour route (95). See the "DDOT Bus Routes Servicing Hamtramck" table for details about each route servicing Hamtramck. Bus service has improved in the last decade for Hamtramck residents with two more bus routes, more frequency during peak periods, and more service on the weekend (routes 12, 52, and 38). The late-night service options, however, remain quite limited with only routes 38 and 52 operating past 10:30 pm. Although bus service has improved slightly since the last master plan, it is important to recognize that almost one-fifth of Hamtramck residents do not have access to a car, and therefore must rely on alternative modes of transportation.

# TABLE: DDOT BUS ROUTES SERVICING HAMTRAMCK

ROUTE NUMBER	ROUTE NAME	ROUTE TYPE	ROUTE DETAILS	DAYS & HOURS OF SERVICE
12	Conant	Neighborhood	Runs through Hamtramck on Conant Street.	Mon-Fri, 5:45 am-8:45 pm (every 50 min) Sat, 7:30 am-8:45 pm (every hour) Sun & Holidays, 8:00 am-6:45 pm (every hour)
40	Russell	Neighborhood	Runs along St. Aubin Street, cuts west on Poland Street, then continues northwest on Dequindre Street.	Mon-Fri, 5:00 am-7:45 pm (every 65 min)
52	Chene	Neighborhood	Runs through the center of Hamtramck on Joseph Campau.	Mon-Fri, 5:00 am-10:45 pm (every 40 min for peak, every hour for off-peak)  Sat, 6:00 am-9:45 pm (every hour)  Sun & Holidays, 8:00 am-7:45 pm (every hour)
38	Plymouth	Key	Runs east-west through Hamtramck along Caniff Street.	Mon-Fri, 4:00 am-12:00 am (every 45 min for day, every hour for evening)  Sat, 4:00 am-10:30 pm (every hour)  Sun & Holidays, 4:00 am-8:30 pm (every hour)
95	Ryan Express	Peak Hour	Runs north on Lumpkin Street, then east on Caniff Street, then North on Conant Street.	Mon-Fri, 6:00 am-6:45pm (peak hours every 35 min)

SOURCE: DETROIT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# MAP: DDOT BUS ROUTES SERVICING HAMTRAMCK (LOCAL)



# MAP: DDOT BUS ROUTES SERVICING HAMTRAMCK (CITYWIDE)



# **MAP: CAR ACCIDENT HOT SPOTS** BELMONT EVALINE YEM ANS CAR ACCIDENT HOT SPOTS WYANDOTTE FABER S I-75 & CANIFF **CANIFF & CONANT CANIFF & CAMPAU CANIFF & GALLAGHER** N I-75 & CANIFF **HOLBROOK & CAMPAU CONANT & HOLBROOK** CANIFF/N I-75 RAMP & N I-75 **HOLBROOK & GALLAGHER CAMPAU & EVALINE** Miles 0.6 0.4

# **Car Accident Hotspots**

Data on high-crash intersections between 2014 and 2018 from SEMCOG show that Caniff remains the most dangerous street in the City. Out of the top ten worst Hamtramck intersections for crashes. Caniff appears six times and accounts for the top four worst intersections at North and South I-75, Conant, Joseph Campau, and Gallagher.4 The stretch along Joseph Campau between Caniff and Holbrook remains a crash hotspot as well, despite changes in the streetscape. Even though the same streets remain dangerous, there have been fewer total accidents over a five-year period. For example, between 2004 and 2008, the top ten most dangerous intersections resulted in a total of 506 crashes; whereas between 2014 and 2018, the top ten most dangerous intersections resulted in a total of 445 crashes.

# Walkability & Biking

In November of 2010, the Hamtramck City Council passed a Complete Streets resolution, which is a step in the right direction toward a more pedestrianand bicycle-friendly city.<sup>5</sup> The next step, however, would be for the City to adopt and implement a Complete Streets Policy. For example, the City rebuilt Holbrook Street in 2018, but did not add any additional bicycling or pedestrian infrastructure.6 Street reconstruction presents a prime opportunity to redesign a street for all users and not just automobiles, and having a Complete Streets Policy in place will ensure that this necessary redesign occurs. As a small and dense urban community, Hamtramck has the structure already in place to be a walkable and bikeable center - this transformation should be a priority for the City.

Since the 2010 Master Plan, there have been very few improvements to walkability and bicycling in Hamtramck. Sidewalks remain in deteriorating condition, and the City's streets still do not have bike lanes. In 2019, however, the City initiated efforts to reduce vehicular speeds and improve pedestrian safety by adding 86 speed limit signs and repairing 94 curbs and corners. Additionally, there are plans to install bike lanes on some streets wtihin the City, and the Joe Louis Greenway project will bring bicycling infrastructure through the heart of Hamtramck, though design specifications have not been finalized yet.

# Transportation Planning Efforts Underway

# **JOE LOUIS GREENWAY**

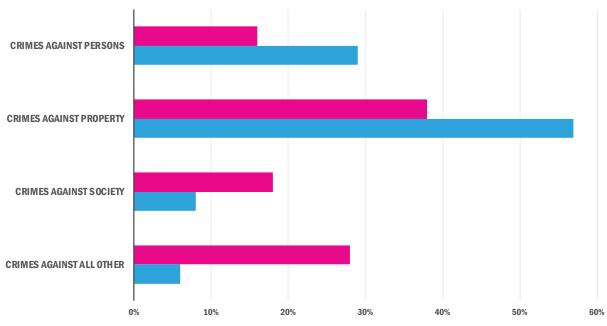
The Joe Louis Greenway is a 31.5-mile planned multimodal trail that will connect the Detroit Riverfront to Hamtramck, Highland Park, and Dearborn. The trail will include the Dequindre Cut and portions of the Detroit Riverwalk, the planned Iron Belle Trail, and the May Creek Greenway. The proposed trail will go through the center of Hamtramck in the alley on the west side of Joseph Campau Avenue. Trail design and framework planning is estimated to be completed sometime in 2020.8 The Joe Louis Greenway will link Hamtramck to the rest of Detroit, and the City must prepare for the economic development and traffic implications that will accompany this incredible asset.

# PUBLIC REALM / QUALITY OF LIFE

# Crime & Perception of Safety

The crime rate in Hamtramck remains higher than state and national averages, though lower than Detroit crime rates.9 The 2018 Michigan State Police crime incident data divides crimes into four main categories: crimes against persons, crimes against property, crimes against society, and crimes against all other. Both Hamtramck (38%) and Detroit (57%) have the highest percentage of crimes against property, though this is a much greater proportion for Detroit. The most common types of crimes against property in Hamtramck include burglary, theft, and property damage; whereas in Detroit, motor vehicle theft is much more common. While there is still motor vehicle theft in Hamtramck, this proportion has decreased over the last decade. Additionally, instances of arson have decreased in Hamtramck with only seven instances reported for 2018. The second-most common category of crime in Hamtramck is "crimes against all other," which predominantly involves obstructing justice - 88% of all "crimes against all other" in Hamtramck. Crimes against society make up 18% of all crime incidents in Hamtramck, and these are predominantly instances of family nonsupport, operating under the influence of alcohol, and violations of a controlled substance. Finally, crimes against persons make up only 16% of all crime incidents in Hamtramck (compared to 29% in Detroit). These types of crimes are predominantly non-aggravated assault.

# FIGURE: 2018 CRIME INCIDENTS: HAMTRAMCK VS. DETROIT



SOURCE: MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

# **ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

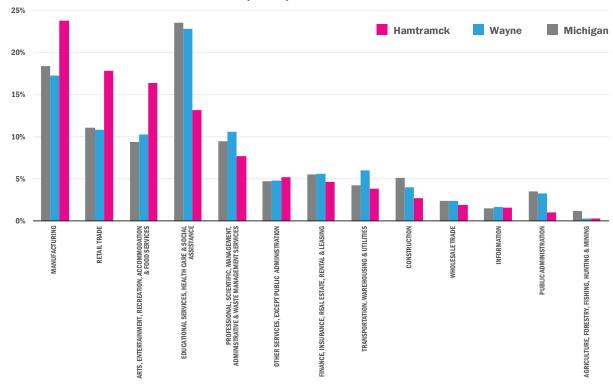
# Attributes of Hamtramck's Employment Base

As of 2019, the City of Hamtramck has roughly 600 business licenses.<sup>10</sup> This is a noticeable increase from the 480 licenses issued in 2009. and the 488 total licenses issued between 2006 and 2009. Since 2009, the ten largest employers of Hamtramck residents have remained much the same; however, American Axel closed and demolished most of its facilities that were within Hamtramck city limits in 2012.11 Many Hamtramck residents still work for American Axel, though physically work in Detroit now instead of Hamtramck. Additionally, NuVue Foods has emerged as a top employer for the City. In operation since 1987, NuVue Foods currently employs 115 associates from cities throughout Southeast Michigan, though predominantly residents from Hamtramck and Detroit.12

# HAMTRAMCK WORKERS

The U.S. Census provides employment data on Hamtramck workers, representing people who live in Hamtramck and have a job, regardless of where that job is. According to 2017 estimates, the industry cluster with the largest employment in Hamtramck workers is still manufacturing, representing a larger percentage than both Wayne County and the State of Michigan. Hamtramck also has a larger percentage of workers within the retail trade industry and the "arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food service" industry than both the County and the State. Retail trade is the industry cluster with the second-largest employment in Hamtramck workers, and this has increased to 18% in 2017 from about 12%

# **FIGURE: HAMTRAMCK INDUSTRIES (2017)**



SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

in 2009. The percentage of Hamtramck workers who are employed within the "arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food service" industry has also increased from about 12% in 2009 to 16% in 2017. This sector is one of Hamtramck's unique traits because of the diverse immigrant population and the excellent local food culture in the City. There are noticeably fewer Hamtramck workers in the "educational services, health care and social assistance" industry as compared to the County and the State, though this difference has remained much the same since 2009.

TABLE: HAMTRAMCK BUSINESSES & EMPLOYEES

	BUSINESSES		EMPL	OYEES
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1	0.2%	2	0.0%
Mining	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Utilities	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Construction	10	1.8%	29	0.7%
Manufacturing	19	3.5%	539	13.1%
Wholesale Trade	13	2.4%	101	2.5%
Retail Trade	139	25.3%	540	13.1%
Transportation & Warehousing	8	1.5%	101	2.5%
Information	22	4.0%	76	1.8%
Finance & Insurance	23	4.2%	111	2.7%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	11	2.0%	73	1.8%
Professions, Scientific & Tech Services	39	7.1%	162	3.9%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services	15	2.7%	75	1.8%
<b>Educational Services</b>	22	4.0%	680	16.5%
Health Care & Social Assistance	54	9.8%	523	12.7%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	16	2.9%	146	3.5%
Accommodation & Food Services	60	10.9%	490	11.9%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	66	12.0%	197	4.8%
Public Administration	8	1.5%	270	6.6%
Unclassified Establishments	23	4.2%	0	0.0%

\*ITEMS IN ORANGE INDATE THE TOP FIVE INDUSTRY CLUSTERS SOURCE: ESRI BUSINESS ANALYST

### HAMTRAMCK EMPLOYEES

ESRI Business Analyst provides information on Hamtramck employees, representing people who work in Hamtramck, regardless of where they live. Since 2009, the industry clusters of Hamtramck employees have changed substantially. As of 2019, the top five industry clusters for Hamtramck employees are: Educational Services (16.5%), Retail Trade (13.1%), Manufacturing (13.1%), Heath Care & Social Assistance (12.7%), and Accommodation & Food Services (11.9%). The percentage of employees working in manufacturing has decreased from around 23% in 2009 to only 13% in 2019 - a very drastic change. The percentage of Hamtramck employees working in educational services has also changed drastically, increasing by over twofold in percentage points from about 7% in 2009 to over 16% in 2019. The percentage of employees working in health care & social assistance has also increased (9% in 2019 to 13% in 2019), though the percentage of Hamtramck employees working in both retail trade and accommodation & food services has remained roughly the same over the past ten years. The 2019 data shows a shift in the Hamtramck employment opportunities from the historic manufacturing dominance to more educational and health-related fields of employment.

# Attributes of Hamtramck's Workforce

# **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

Historically, Hamtramck has been less educated relative to the state, region, and neighboring municipalities. As of 2017 estimates, 67% of Hamtramck adults have a high school diploma or less while 53% of Detroit adults have a high school diploma or less. Only 33% of Hamtramck adults have attended or graduated any level of college, 15% of which have no college degree. Comparatively, a noticeably larger 47% of Detroit adults have attended or graduated any level of

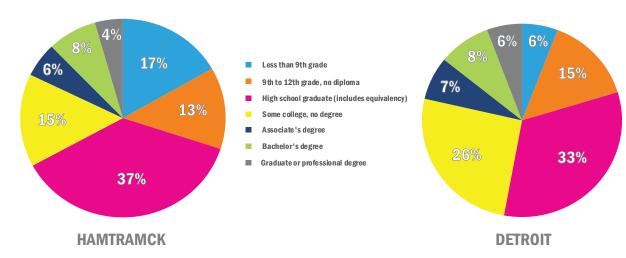
college, though 26% of these adults have no college degree. Low education levels continue to be a weakness for Hamtramck and providing more educational opportunities for residents should be a priority for the City.

# **OCCUPATIONS**

The U.S. Census tracks occupational data, though collects the information from residents instead of workplaces. Thus, the occupational data in this section reflects the occupations of Hamtramck and Wayne County residents, regardless of where they work. Between 2010 and 2017, there was an increase in "management, business, science & arts" and "sales and office" occupations in Hamtramck. Over the same period, there was a decrease in "service," "natural resources, construction & maintenance," and "production, transportation & material moving" occupations in the City.

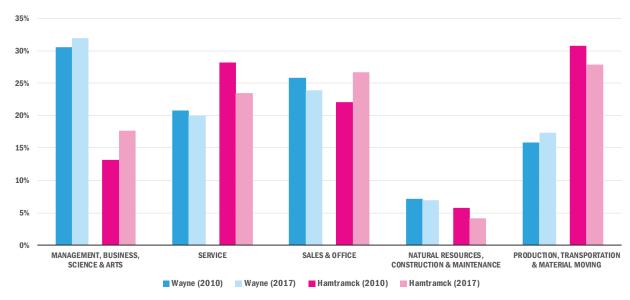
Compared to Wayne County, there is a noticeable difference in the percentage of "management, business, science & arts" occupations and "production, transportation & material moving" occupations. As of 2017 estimates, 32% of Wayne County residents work in a "management, business, science & arts" job, where only 17% of Hamtramck residents work in this occupation. Conversely, only 17% of Wayne County residents work in "production, transportation & material moving," whereas 28% of Hamtramck residents work in this type of occupation. This distinct difference speaks to the lower educational attainment levels in Hamtramck. Despite this difference, however, the increase in "management, business, science & arts" occupations and "sales & office" occupations for Hamtramck residents indicate a positive trend toward jobs that require higher education levels and show that Hamtramck residents are gaining more job skills and prospects.

# FIGURE: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: HAMTRAMCK VS. DETROIT



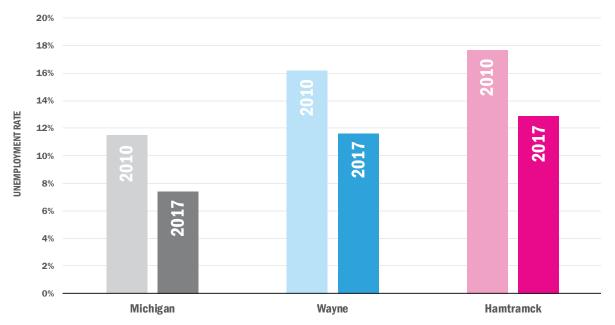
SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

# FIGURE: HAMTRAMCK VS. WAYNE COUNTY OCCUPATIONS, 2010-2017



SOURCES: 2010 DECENNIAL CENSUS & AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

# FIGURE: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, 2010-2017



SOURCES: 2010 DECENNIAL CENSUS & AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2013-2017 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

# Employed in Hamtramck but live outside Employed and live in Hamtramck but employed outside employed outside

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU ON THE MAP TOOL

# UNEMPLOYMENT

Between 2010 and 2017, unemployment rates dropped nationwide, including in the State of Michigan, Wayne County, and Hamtramck.

Between 2010 and 2017, the unemployment rate in Hamtramck dropped from 18% to 13%.

Although unemployment rates have improved in the past decade, it is important to note that the estimated 2017 unemployment rate (of residents in the civilian labor force) in Hamtramck (13%) remains higher than Wayne County (12%) and almost double that of the State (7%), indicating that unemployment remains a concern for the City.

# Commuting

An analysis of 2017 Hamtramck worker data reveals trends consistent with the past few

decades. According to the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics dataset from the U.S. Census Bureau, there are only 503 residents that both live and work in Hamtramck, representing a mere 7% of the Hamtramck workforce. This leaves the other 93% of the workforce, 6,916 Hamtramck residents, traveling outside of Hamtramck for employment. Another 2,346 people are estimated to work in Hamtramck but live outside of the City, representing about 82% of all workers employed in Hamtramck.<sup>13</sup>

Given the fact that Hamtramck is a small municipality surrounded by the City of Detroit, these statistics are not shocking, though they are more drastic than they were in 2000. Between 2000 and 2017, the percentage of Hamtramck residents both living and working within the City decreased from 15% in 2000 to 7% in 2017. This shows that employment opportunities within the City for Hamtramck residents have declined even more so in the past two decades, though also shows that local Hamtramck businesses continue to attract employees from different geographies. The economic benefits of living, working, and spending wages within the community are perhaps not as prevalent in Hamtramck due to the fluid nature of commuting and employment within the area. While Hamtramck certainly encompasses a very small area and by no means could offer employment for all its residents, increasing the number of Hamtramck residents who work within the City would benefit the community and its local economy.

# Residential and Commercial Market Conditions

# **COMMERCIAL MARKET CONDITIONS**

Hamtramck's commercial and industrial markets remain intricately linked and synonymous with those of the City of Detroit. Analyzing data from both CBRE and Loopnet, the two data primary sources used in the previous master plan, provides a comparison for how retail and commercial market conditions have changed in the region over the past decade.

### **OFFICE**

As of the third quarter of 2019, vacancy in Detroit's office market has declined from 22% to 14% over the past five years. Office availability has also declined from 25% to 19%, indicating a noticeable decrease in vacant office buildings in Detroit. The office market in Downtown Detroit is quite strong and has over 2.1 million square feet of office space under construction, a number that has not existed in Detroit in nearly two decades. Lease rates in Downtown Detroit are now higher than lease rates in most of the suburbs at a rate of \$21.46 per square foot. 15

# RETAIL

Retail development is concentrated in distinct areas in Detroit, especially downtown. Downtown Detroit has evolved as a magnet for new and creative retail development, creating low availability of space and high rents. In Hamtramck, there are currently three retail opportunities for rent, all with multiple retail space opportunities, and two of which have defined lease rates: \$14.63 per square foot per year and \$11.50 per square foot per year.

### **INDUSTRIAL**

The vacancy rate for the industrial market has decreased substantially in Detroit over the past decade. As of quarter three of 2019, the industrial vacancy rate in Detroit was only 2.1%, and the industrial availability is only 3.3%. There are currently no industrial properties for lease in Hamtramck.

# **RESIDENTIAL MARKET CONDITIONS**

According to estimates from 2013-2017, the median house value (of occupied units) in Hamtramck is \$53,900 (with a margin of error of +/- \$5,043), which is a significant decrease

from the 2009 median house value of \$68,027 but an impressive recovery from the 2010-2014 median value of \$39,800. The same decreasing value trend exists in the City of Detroit as median house values have gone from \$59,268 in 2009 to \$42,800 in 2017. Home values have fully recovered in Wayne County, however, from \$88,914 in 2009 to \$92,400 in 2017. There could be numerous reasons for why housing values are decreasing in both Hamtramck and Detroit; a few likely causes include aging housing stock and higher rates of both poverty and vacancy. Conversely, both Hamtramck and Detroit remain more affordable places to live, providing opportunities for local real estate investment.

# Brownfields

The previous master plan listed five opportunity sites eligible for brownfield grant funding. Two of these properties – Omni Properties and the Al Deeby Dodge Dealership – are now occupied or have been worked on, though none of the properties used brownfield grant funding. Further, part of the Shoppers World site now serves as a City parking lot. Thus, there have been no brownfield projects in Hamtramck since the previous master plan, though brownfield grant funding remains an important redevelopment opportunity that the City should pursue.

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# **STEPS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION 2010**

# STEPS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION

As the first comprehensive plan undertaken for the City since the 1970s, it was the responsibility of this work to evaluate the potential future and not limit the strategies based solely on what the City can do on its own. This means that although this work was sponsored by the City, the scope was much broader resulting in a series of recommendations that necessitates great cooperation, hard work, and persistence to ensure that resulting change delivers success to the residents, business owners, and stakeholders in Hamtramck. This document is a guide and while there are many strategies that the City can seek funds independently, many others require the City to continue the conversation and build greater momentum moving forward. City and State agencies, local institutions, and interested developers must form an active dialog about these recommendations. The City will need to creatively blend dollars from both public and private sources to maximize impact.

This plan can, and should, be updated in 10 years. Funding sources and programs, political representatives, community leaders, on the ground conditions, and even some local priorities will change in ways that are impossible to predict fully. As different recommendations move forward, the City's priorities should be re-evaluated, and, if necessary, new recommendations that reinforce the goals and objectives set forth during this process should be considered.

# > EVOLUTION OF THE CITY

It is important to put this type of plan into perspective. Hamtramck emerged from State receivership some years ago and found a new footing to move

forward. Unfortunately, the recent economic crisis has placed the City in financial distress again. The City's decision to undertake this plan builds on best practices around the country that have used plans to not only save money in delivering services but also to raise money for necessary improvements.

In response, this plan is forward thinking but also pragmatic. While there are a significant number of ideas and recommendations included in this document, they represent funding possibilities. Many seek to make a maximum impact with limited dollars. Implementation will require more than the City can reasonably accomplish on its own. For these reasons, it is important that those most committed to the plan and the future of Hamtramck continue to drive the project forward. The City and the growing number of interested residents and non-profit organizations need to have an ongoing voice to creatively respond to the bumps in the road that ultimately challenges any implementation process.

The core stakeholders that have actively committed their time and energy into seeing this plan completed are needed now more than ever because in the coming months, it will be important to keep the momentum built during the planning process alive by taking some immediate steps.

# Take some immediate next steps

The City and its coalition of involved residents and local institutions will need to take several important next steps – with the State of Michigan, regional organizations like MSHDA, with potential funders, and with the residents and stakeholders themselves – to ensure that those involved stay involved and embrace an active role in the plan's implementation.

# > SUBMIT THE PLAN FOR ADOPTION

The first action item for the City is to present this plan for adoption to City Council and the Mayor. Such official recognition of this plan is necessary to make certain that the different elements of the plan are incorporated into City policy and thus achieved over the longer term. Floating the plan among City representatives will also raise awareness that significant strides have been made to organize the local stakeholders and prepare for the City's improvement.

# > PRESENT THIS PLAN, IN FULL, TO INTERESTED FOUNDATIONS

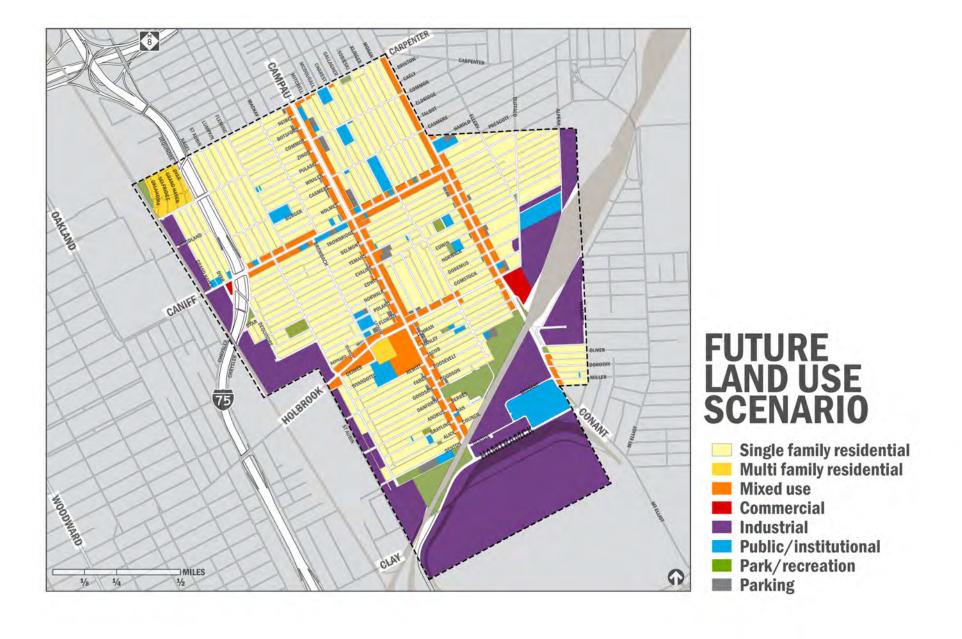
Submit this plan to the Kresge Foundation, Mott Foundation, Ford Foundation and Skillman Foundation for discussion about potential implementation funding.

# > GET INVOLVED WITH DETROIT WORKS

The City of Detroit is currently taking on its most comprehensive and forward thinking planning initiative in decades. It has already received national media attention due to a number of factors including the dire issues Detroit currently faces. While the plan has just started, it will likely result in targeted lobbying for implementation dollars from Federal, State and private sources. Hamtramck now has a head start with great data and a packaged set of strategies to move forward. This plan needs to be a part of the Detroit Works initiative to put Hamtramck on the national map and, most importantly, to line up potential funding sources that are mutually beneficial to both cities.

# > FORM ACTION TEAMS

The City should form sub-committees, or Action Teams, to serve as a resident and stakeholder-driven force for implementation. The Action Teams should correspond to the goal areas established in the recommendations section of this plan. In



this way, the Action Teams will directly address the City's critical needs.

The Action Teams should consist of volunteers – local residents, students, faculty, and business owners as well as representatives of service providers and core institutions – who are interested in ensuring the success of that particular focus. Each Action Team must have a designated lead volunteer and take responsibility for its part of plan implementation, coordinate regularly with the City, set aggressive schedules, and monitor its progress. Action Teams should meet quarterly to discuss their progress and update City Council twice a year.

# > ADD ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

This plan adds to the City's To Do list, and as the plan moves toward implementation, resident, student, faculty and business support and participation are key to the ultimate success of the plan. The CHCC must continue to work to inspire all stakeholders to get involved and stay involved. While both the City's professional capacity is impressive, new staff will be needed to grow in order to keep up with existing responsibilities plus new tasks stemming from the plan.

Within the next year, the City should seek assistance from a local foundation to hire additional staff to fulfill some of the tasks outlined in this plan. A case has to be made to those interested in investing in the City that what is critically needed now is more capacity to drive implementation forward.

# Implementation Matrix and Phasing

Attached is an Implementation Matrix that details the timeframe and potential partners for each recommendation. The spreadsheet is intended to serve as a guide to help organize and track the City's progress in implementing the plan's components. It should be used actively, updated, and changed once implementation commences.

While the Implementation Matrix addresses each recommendation, discussions with the City, community stakeholders, non-profit organizations and partners have identified a number of priority projects. These priority projects are defined as critical investments that can have a transformative impact on the City in the coming years and can be achieved given the City's budget constraints. While some of these projects will not be implemented fully within the next few years, it is important that progress be made toward their implementation.

The City, its partners, and community members have identified the following as priority projects:

# 1. QUALITY OF LIFE:

- [1.2.1] Proactively Enforce Cleaner Streets
- [1.2.4] Mobilize Neighborhood Clean Ups
- [1.2.5] Make Full Use Of Free Clean-Up Resources
- [1.4.1] Prioritize High-Impact Areas In Hamtramck For Demolitions
- [1.4.2] Recommend Priority Tear-Downs In Neighboring Areas Of Detroit
- [1.6.3] Establish A Resident-Assisted Neighborhood Lighting Improvement Program

# 2. PUBLIC SERVICES:

- [2.1.2] Increase Awareness Of Best Stormwater Management Practices
- [2.2.3] Establish Regular Recycling Services In Hamtramck
- [2.2.6] Increase Public Awareness Of Energy Efficiency Resources
- [2.4.1] Continue Cultural Education Workshops

- [2.5.2] Paint The Fire Hydrants
- [2.6.3] Prioritize (Public School) Facility Needs
- [2.8.2] Create A Coordinated Hamtramck Service Directory And Referral System For Social Services
- [2.9.1] Conduct An Information Technology Needs Assessment For City Agencies
- [2.9.3] Reboot The City's Website

### 3. TRANSPORTATION:

- [3.2.1] Improve Code Enforcement Of Alley Maintenance
- [3.3.3] Stripe Crosswalks To Increase Pedestrian Visibility
- [3.3.4] Continue Efforts To Improve Pedestrian Safety Near Schools
- [3.3.7] Establish A Pedestrian Advocacy Group
- [3.4.1] Support Implementation Of The Hamtramck Bikeway
- [3.5.5] Continually Review Intersection Design For Bike Friendliness
- [3.8.2] Advocate For Improved Transit Connections
  To Detroit

# **4. CULTURAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

- [4.1.3] Continue And Expand Opportunity Site Marketing Efforts
- [4.3.1] Create A Business Services One-Stop In City Hall
- [4.4.2] Sell The City

- [4.4.7] Expand Multicultural Events
- [4.5] Expand And Promote The City's Brand(S)
- [4.6.2] Market Hamtramck To Detroit Visitors
- [4.7.2] Form A Conant Street Corridor Improvement District
- [4.8.3] Actively Discourage Panhandling
- [4.15.1] Marry Art And Existing Commercial Establishments
- [4.16.1] Retain Existing Industrial Producers
- [4.16.2] Develop An Industrial Development Strategy

# 5. HOUSING:

- [5.1.1] Improve Housing Code Enforcement
- [5.1.3] Demolish Dangerous Abandoned Structures
- [5.4.1] Resolve The R-31 Lawsuit

# **6. PARKS & RECREATION:**

- [6.1] Consolidate Park Stewardship
- [6.2.1] Establish Friends-Of Park Groups
- [6.3.3] Improve Veterans Park



# **IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE**

The 2010 Master Plan contained an extensive set of recommendations which can serve as Hamtramck's to-do list for the entire 20-year horizon of the plan. The City has updated this Master Plan Implementation Matrix with accomplishments since its adoption, serving as both a helpful reference and an occasion to celebrate success. The updated matrix is presented on the following pages.

# **TABLE: 2010 MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

QUALITY OF LIFE & THE PUBLIC REALM						
	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)			
GOAL 1: Make an impression at Gateways to the City						
1.1	Improve the North Campau Gateway	Next	CED, BC, CM			
1.2	Improve the South Campau Gateway	Next	CED, BC, CM			
1.3	Improve the West Caniff Gateway	Next	CED, BC, CM			
1.4	Improve the I-75 Gateway at Nagel and Dequindre	Next	CED, BC, CM			
1.5	Make Improvements to the I-75 Shoulder, Underpasses, and Offramps	Next	CED, BC, CM			
GOAL	2: Take Out the Trash					
<b>V</b>	Proactively Enforce Cleaner Streets	Ongoing	CED, CE			
<b>✓</b>	Provide Trash Cans at Strategic Locations	Ongoing	DPS			
2.3	Institute Adopt-A-Can Program	Near	DDA			
<b>✓</b>	Make Full Use of Free Clean-Up Resources	Ongoing	CM, CED			
<b>✓</b>	Mobilize Neighborhood Clean Ups	Ongoing	CED			
<b>V</b>	Creatively Discourage Illegal Dumping	Ongoing	CED, CM, DPS, CE			
GOAL	3: Expand Vacant Land Management Efforts					
3.1	Support Interim Urban Agriculture	Next	CED, BC			
3.2	Make Temporary Low-Cost Improvements to Development Opportunity Gateway Sites	Next	CM, BC			
3.3	Link Aspiring Green Thumbs with Community Gardening Space	Next	CM, CED, BC			
3.4	Create Partnerships with Established Greening Organization	Ongoing	CED, BC			
GOAL	4: Demolish Abandoned and Dangerous Structures					
<b>✓</b>	Prioritize High-Impact Areas in Hamtramck	Completed	BD			
4.2	Recommend Priority Tear-Downs in Neighboring Areas of Detroit	Next	BD, CM			
GOAL	5: Improve the City's Tree Canopy					
<b>V</b>	Adopt a Tree Ordinance	Ongoing	CM, City Council			
<b>✓</b>	Conduct a City-Wide Tree Inventory	Ongoing	CM			
5.3	Adopt a Tree Planting Plan	Next	DPS			
<b>V</b>	Adopt a Tree Maintenance Plan	Ongoing	DPS			
<b>V</b>	Encourage the Community to Plant Trees	Ongoing	DPS, CED			
GOAL	6: Improve Night Visibility					
<b>V</b>	Prioritize Night Visibility Improvement Areas	Ongoing	CM			
<b>✓</b>	Upgrade Lighting Infrastructure to Improve Efficiency	Ongoing	CM, DPS			
6.3	Establish a Resident-Assisted Neighborhood Lighting Improvement Plan	Next	CM			

PUBL	IC SERVICE & FACILITIES		
	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)
GOAL	1: Expand Stormwater Management Capacity		
<b>✓</b>	Implement Planned Stormwater Management Infrastructure Improvements	Ongoing	DPS
1.2	Increase Awareness of Stormwater Best Management Practices	Next	CED, CM
1.3	Toughen Zoning Landscaping Requirements	Next	PC
1.4	Use Public Facility Grounds to Set a Good Example	Next	DPS, CM
1.5	Green the Streets	Next	CM, PC
1.6	Consider Levying an Impervious Area Tax	Next	CM
GOAL	2: Set an Example for Sustainable Practices		
<b>✓</b>	Shed Some Light on Being Green	Ongoing	CM
2.2	Pave the Way for Green Development	Near	CED
<b>✓</b>	Establish Regular Recycling Services in Hamtramck	Ongoing	CM
2.4	Recycle Everything	Next	CM
<b>√</b>	Consider Green Retrofits to Increase Energy Efficiency of Public Buildings	Ongoing	CM, DPS
<b>√</b>	Increase Public Awareness of Energy Efficiency Resources	Ongoing	CED, CM
GOAL	3: Address Snow Removal Problems		
<b>V</b>	Address Snow Removal Problems	Ongoing	CM, DPS, PD
GOAL	4: Establish Safer Streets		
<b>✓</b>	Continue Cultural Education Workshops	Ongoing	CED, PD
<b>✓</b>	Reinforce the Force Where Necessary	Ongoing	PD
<b>V</b>	Coordinate with Resident Groups to Establish Community Policing	Ongoing	CED, PD
4.4	Supplement Patrols with Bicycle Policing	Next	PD
<b>V</b>	Seek to Reinstate the K9 Unit	Ongoing	PD
<b>V</b>	Modernize the Police Department's Records Management System	Completed	PD
GOAL	5: Better Equip the Fire Department		
<b>✓</b>	Improve the Fire Department's Equipment	Ongoing	CM, City Council
<b>V</b>	Paint the Hydrants	Ongoing	DPS
5.3	Improve the Fire Station and Plan for Its Future	Next	CM
GOAL	6: Continue to Improve Education Resources and Facilities		
6.1	Evaluate Hamtramck's Education Resources	Next	HPS, PS
6.2	Prioritize Facility Needs	Next	HPS, PS
6.3	Engage the Charter Schools	Next	CED
6.4	Create an After School Arabic Program	Next	CED

PUBL	IC SERVICE & FACILITIES (Continued)		
	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)
GOAL	7: Support the Expansion of the Hamtramck Public Library		
7.1	Initiate a Facilities Planning and Feasibility Study	Next	CM, LB
7.2	Address Parking Constraints	Next	CM, LB
7.3	Pursue Temporary Satellite Locations	Next	CM, LB
7.4	Increase Awareness of the Library's Resources	Near	CM, LB
GOAL	8: Fill Holes in the Service Gaps		
8.1	Undertake a Social Services Audit	Near	CED
<b>V</b>	Create a Coordinated Hamtramck Service Directory and Referral System	Ongoing	CED
8.3	Expand Youth Programming	Near	PAC, HRC
8.4	Provide Night Activities and Safe Havens for Youth	Near	PAC
8.5	Help Foreign-Born Residents Establish New Roots in Hamtramck	Near	CED
<b>✓</b>	Establish an "Almost Free Clinic" in Hamtramck	Ongoing	CED
GOAL	9: Plug City Hall into New Technology Resources		
<b>√</b>	Conduct an Information Technology Needs Assessment for City Agencies	Completed	CM
<b>V</b>	Modernize Records Keeping and Data Management	Ongoing	BS, DPS
<b>V</b>	Reboot City's Website	Ongoing	CM
9.4	Establish a City Hall Compu-Concierge	Near	CM
<b>V</b>	Overhaul Parcel Database Management	Ongoing	DPS

	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)	
GOAL	1: Prioritize Street Improvement Projects			
<b>✓</b>	Maximize the Opportunity of Street Reconstruction Projects	Ongoing	CM, DPS	
<b>V</b>	Reconstruct Campau Between Caniff and Carpenter	Completed	CM, DPS	
1.3	Reconstruct Conant Street	Next	CM, DPS	
1.4	Improve Intersection of Conant and Commor	Next	CM, DPS, CED	
<b>V</b>	Improve Intersection Sight Distance	Ongoing	CM, DPS, CED	
GOAL 2: Restore Public Alleys				
<b>V</b>	Improve Code Enforcement of Alley Maintenance	Ongoing	CE, CM	
<b>V</b>	Transform Alleys as Community Assets	Next	DPS, CM,CED	

TRAN	TRANSPORTATION (Continued)							
	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)					
GOAL	GOAL 3: Strengthen Walkability and Sidewalk Accessibility							
<b>V</b>	Reduce Crossing Distances at Select Intersections	Ongoing	CM					
<b>V</b>	Increase Access to Crossing Locations on Busy Streets	Ongoing	CM, DPS					
<b>✓</b>	Stripe Crosswalks to Increase Pedestrian Visibility	Ongoing	CM, DPS					
<b>V</b>	Continue Efforts to Improve Pedestrian Safety Near Schools	Ongoing	CM, HPS					
<b>✓</b>	Improve Sidewalks	Ongoing	CED, DPS					
3.6	Use Zone Approach to Improve Sidewalk Accessibility	Next	CM, PC					
3.7	Establish a Pedestrian Advocacy Group	Next	CED					
GOAL	4: Accommodate Bikes on Roadways							
<b>✓</b>	Support the Implementation of the Hamtramck Bikeway	Ongoing	CED					
<b>✓</b>	Establish a Complete Bike Network	Ongoing	CM, DPS					
<b>V</b>	Support Bike & Trail Planning to Improve Connections Outside of Hamtramck	Ongoing	CED, CM					
GOAL	5: Create a Safe Biking Environment							
<b>✓</b>	Provide Safe and Convenient Bike Parking	Ongoing	CED					
5.2	Light the Way for Bikes	Near	CED, DPS					
<b>✓</b>	Put Training Wheels on Bikers and Drivers	Ongoing	CED, PD					
5.4	Strategically Mobilize Police & Street Safety Liaisons to Ensure Safer Biking	Next	PD					
5.5	Continually Review Intersection Design for Bike Friendliness	Next	PD					
GOAL	6: Support Bike Culture							
<b>✓</b>	Bring Bike Culture into the Spotlight	Ongoing	CED					
<b>✓</b>	Develop Local Bike Advocacy	Ongoing	CED					
GOAL	7: Address Parking Issues							
<b>✓</b>	Develop Smart City-Wide Parking Policy	Ongoing	CM, DPS, PD					
7.2	Address On-Street Residential Parking Constraints	Next	CM, DPS, PD					
<b>✓</b>	Improve Signage Directing Drivers to Parking Lots	Ongoing	CM, DPS, PD					
GOAL	8: Improve Access to Public Transportation Options							
8.1	Create Design Standards for Bus Shelters	Next	CED					
	Advocate for Improved Transit Connections to Detroit	Ongoing	CED					
8.3	Create a Hamtramck Transit Center	Next	СМ					
8.4	Advocate for Rail Transit	Next	СМ					
GOAL	9: Improve Signage and Wayfinding							
_ <	Improve Signage and Wayfinding	Ongoing	CM, DPS					

CULT	CULTURAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)				
GOAL	GOAL 1: Strengthen the Structure of Economic Development in City Hall						
1.1	Elevate the Economic Development Corporation	Next	CED				
<b>✓</b>	Strengthen the Case for Locating in Hamtramck	Ongoing	DDA, CED				
<b>✓</b>	Continue and Expand Opportunity Site Marketing Efforts	Ongoing	DDA, CED				
<b>✓</b>	Set a Consistent Approach to New Development	Ongoing	DDA, CED, PC				
<b>V</b>	Advocate for Neighborhood Improvements	Ongoing	DDA, CED				
GOAL	2: Strengthen and Retrain the Local Workforce						
2.1	Assess Employer Needs	Near	CED				
2.1	Promote Workforce Readiness	Near	CED				
GOAL	3: Foster Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development						
3.1	Create a Business Services One-Stop in City Hall	Next	CED				
3.2	Expand Local Food Businesses	Next	DDA, CED				
GOAL	4: Re-Establish Roles for the Chamber of Commerce and Market and Events Coord	lination Activities in	City Hall				
<b>✓</b>	Represent the Interests of All Businesses in the City	Ongoing	CED				
<b>~</b>	Sell the City	Ongoing	CED, DDA				
4.3	Be Green	Next	City Council, CED, CM, BC				
_ <	Buy Local	Ongoing	DDA, CED				
<b>✓</b>	Fill Out the Events Calendar	Ongoing	CED, CM				
_ <	Turn Up the Volume on Hamtramck Blowout and Local Music Scene	Ongoing	CED, DDA				
<b>✓</b>	Expand Multicultural Events	Ongoing	CED, CM, DDA				
GOAL	5: Expand and Promote the City's Brand(s)						
<b>_</b>	Expand and Promote City's Brands	Ongoing	CED, CM, DDA				
GOAL	6: Increase Visitorship and Showcase the City's Efforts						
<b>✓</b>	Actively Market Hamtramck as a Destination to Residents of Detroit and Inner Ring Suburbs	Ongoing	CM, CED, DDA				
<b>✓</b>	Market Hamtramck to Detroit Visitors	Ongoing	CM, CED, DDA				
<b>✓</b>	Crowdsource Local Tour Guidance	Ongoing	CM, CED, DDA				
6.4	Improve Access to Information about Local Destinations	Near	CM, CED, DDA				
6.5	Launch a Hamtramck Chotchkies and Top Notch Tees Pop Up Shop	Next	DDA, Community				
<b>✓</b>	Preserve and Expand Visitor Destinations	Ongoing	CM, CED, DDA				
6.7	Establish Local Hospitality Business	Next	DDA, CED				
GOAL	7: Improve the Commercial Corridor Experience						
<b>✓</b>	Leverage the Downtown Development Authority	Ongoing	DDA, CED				

	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)
7.2	Form a Conant Street Corridor Improvement District	Next	DDA, CED
7.3	Encourage Businesses to Install Alternative Sign Designs	Next	CED
7.4	Tap into Local Artists to Activate Vacant Storefronts	Next	CED, DDA
<b>√</b>	Encourage Use of the Facade Improvement Program	Ongoing	CED, DDA
<u> </u>	Improve Signage to Public Parking	Ongoing	CED, DDA
7.7	Consider Supplementary Public Parking Options	Next	City Council
<b>√</b>	Make Parking Pay	Ongoing	City Council
•	3: Develop and Enforce Ordinances and Regulations to Maintain Public Safety and		-
8.1	Bring Bicycle Policing and Foot Patrols to Commercial Corridors	Next	Police
8.2	Actively Discourage Panhandling	N/A	N/A
8.3	Regulate Truck Delivery Hours	Next	PD
GOALS	D: Re/Define Commercial Corridor Zoning and Design Guidelines		
<b>✓</b>	Define Commercial Corridor Zoning and Design Guidelines	Ongoing	CED, PC
9.2	Allow Building Setback Flexibility in Certain Cases	Next	CED, PC
9.3	Limit Curb Cuts in Commercial C2 Zone	Near	CED, PC
9.4	Enforce Primary Entrance Requirements	Near	CED, PC
9.4	Discourage Use of Metal Security Fencing	Next	CED, PC
GOAL 2	10: Attract New Commercial Development		
10.1	Develop a Specific Strategy for the Former Shoppers World Site	Next	CED, BD
10.2	Retrofit Hamtramck Town Center	Next	CED
10.3	Fill the Commercial Gaps	Near	CED
<b>✓</b>	Establish New Small Businesses that Strengthen and Reinforce Hamtramck's Unique Identity	Ongoing	CED
10.5	Selectively Attract National Businesses to Supplement Local Business Districts	Near	CED
GOAL 2	L1: Attract a Higher Education Institution to Hamtramck		
11.1	Attract a Higher Education Institution to Hamtramck	Next	CED, CM
GOAL 2	12: Create an Arts and Cultural Council for the City of Hamtramck		
12.1	Create an Arts and Cultural Council	Near	City Clerk
<b>✓</b>	Develop the Local Arts and Cultural Scene	Ongoing	CED, ACC, DDA, BC
12.3	Provide Entrepreneurial and Development Support for Creative Professionals	Near	CED, ACC, DDA
12.4	Develop Intentional Relationships with Local and Regional Arts Organizations Outside the City	Near	CED, ACC

CULTU	CULTURAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Continued)				
	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)		
GOAL 1	13: Bring Creativity to the Streets				
13.1	Bring Creativity to the Streets	Near	ACC, CED, BC		
<b>✓</b>	Explore a Variety of Potential Funding Sources	Ongoing	CED, CM, DDA		
13.3	Utilize Vacant Lots for Creative Programming	Next	ACC, DDA, CED		
GOAL 1	14: Strengthen the Creative Community				
14.1	Develop Local Creative Skills and Establish a Campus for Artistic Instruction	Next	CED, ACC		
14.2	Create Shared Production Spaces	Next	CED, ACC		
GOAL 1	L5: Develop New Outlets for Art in Hamtramck				
15.1	Marry Art and Existing Commercial Establishments	Near	CED, DDA, ACC		
<b>V</b>	Assist Arts Community in Establishing Permanent Galleries and Event Spaces	Ongoing	HATCH		
15.3	Selectively Unearth Underground Assets	Next	CED, ACC		
GOAL 1	16: Get Industrial Development Back in Gear				
<b>✓</b>	Retain Existing Industrial Producers	Ongoing	CM, CED		
16.2	Formulate an Industrial Development Strategy	Next	CM, City Council, CED		
<b>V</b>	Review Zoning Requirements for Industrial Developments	Ongoing	PC		

HOUS	HOUSING				
	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)		
GOAL 1: Improve Existing Housing					
<b>✓</b>	Improve Housing Code Enforcement	Ongoing	BD, CE, CED		
<b>✓</b>	Provide Support for Existing Homeowners to Help Residents Improve Their Properties	Ongoing	CED		
<b>V</b>	Demolish Dangerous and Abandoned Structures	Completed	BD, CM		
GOAL 2: Expand Housing Services for Homeowners, Renters, and Landlords					
<b>✓</b>	Retain Existing Homeowners and Encourage Eligible Renters to Buy Homes in Hamtramck	Ongoing	CED, City Council		
2.2	Expand Homeowner and Homebuyer Education About Predatory Lending	Next	CED, DDA		
2.3	Support Good Landlords	Next	CED		
2.4	Support the Creation of a Hamtramck Tenants' Association to Resolve Tenant-Landlord Disputes	Next	CED		
<b>✓</b>	Improve Housing Services for the Growing Immigrant and Foreign-Born Population	Ongoing	CED, DDA		

HOUS	HOUSING (Continued)					
	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)			
GOAL	GOAL 3: Promote Hamtramck's Neighborhoods and Expand Local Capacity					
<b>✓</b>	Increase Awareness of Block Club Organizations	Ongoing	CED, DDA			
3.2	Develop a Comprehensive List of Neighborhood Websites to Communities Without a Web Presence	Next	CED			
<b>✓</b>	Create a Collection of House and Neighborhood Tours that Market Different Eras of the City's Growth	Ongoing	CED, Historical Museum			
3.4	Undertake Grass-Roots Comprehensive Plans for Neighborhoods to Inform Investment Decisions	Next	CED, City Council, Block Clubs, CM			
GOAL 4: Establish the Foundation for New Housing Development						
<b>✓</b>	Resolve the R-31 Lawsuit	Ongoing	CM, City Council			
4.2	Pursue Affordable Housing Development Resources	Near	CED			
4.3	Encourage New Development Through an Effective Permitting Process	Near	CED			
4.4	Subsidize Artist Studios/Housing in Exchange for Community Service	Near	CED			
4.5	Create a New Residential Infill Zoning Category	Near	CED			
4.6	Allow a More Urban Mixed Used Typology	Near	CED			
4.7	Consider Reducing Parking Requirements in Residential Zones	Near	CED			
4.8	Encourage Green Retrofits and Sustainable Living	Near	CED			
GOAL	5: Pursue New Housing Development Opportunities					
5.1	Encourage Infill Housing on Vacant Lots	Next	CM, DPS, BD, PC			
5.2	Provide Support for Conversion or Renovation of Upper Floors for Residential Use	Next	CED, DDA			
5.3	Strengthen Hamtramck's Student Housing Supply	Near	CED			
5.4	Consider Potential for Transit-Oriented Development	Next	CM, CED			
5.5	Pursue Hope VI Redevelopment of Colonel Hamtramck Homes	Next	CM			

RECREATION & OPEN SPACE				
	Action	Time Frame	Task Leader(s)	
GOAL 1: Consolidate Park Stewardship				
<b>V</b>	Consolidate Park Stewardship	Ongoing	CM, City Council	
GOAL 2: Encourage Community Stewardships of Parks and Open Spaces				
2.1	Establish Friends-of-Parks Groups	Near	CED	
<b>✓</b>	Institute an Inmate Work Crew Park Clean Up Program	Ongoing	CM	
2.3	Pursue Hope VI Redevelopment of Colonel Hamtramck Homes	Next	HC	
GOAL 3:				
3.1	Provide Wireless Broadband and Charging Ports for Public Spaces	Next	CM, DDA	
<b>V</b>	Create a More Welcoming Pope Park	Completed	DDA, DPS, CM	
<b>V</b>	Revitalize Veterans Park	Ongoing	СМ	
3.4	Improve School Recreation Spaces	Near	HPS	
3.5	Consider Alternative Recreational Programming	Near	Hamtramck Recreation	
GOAL 4:				
<b>V</b>	Establish New Park Spaces on Vacant Lots	Ongoing	City Council	
4.2	Create a Linear Park and Multi-Use Path Around Town Center Superblock	Next	CED	
4.3	Create a Teen Center/Membership Gym	Next	CED, Community	

# **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY 2020**

# **ZONING PLAN**

A zoning plan is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, and it serves as the link between the zoning ordinance and the master plan by specifically identifying inconsistencies in the zoning ordinance with recommendations in the master plan. The zoning ordinance is the primary implementation tool that the City has for the future development of Hamtramck. This Zoning Plan consolidates recommendations from the 2010 Implementation Plan, the Redevelopment Ready Communities Baseline Report of 2018, and the 2019 Master Plan Update steering committee.

It is recommended that the City undertake a substantial update to its zoning code in the very near term. Significant changes to both use and form are contained within the Zoning Plan, and a coordinated approach will reduce confusion and error. The combination of subtantial completed planning work and physical redevelopment opportunity make this period particularly opportune for effective regulatory reform.

# **Proposed Changes**

# REVIEW AND UPDATE PERMITTED USES IN EACH ZONING DISTRICT.

Many development requests do do not match the existing permitted uses in zoning districts. Reviewing and updating the permitted uses within each zoning district will help with conistency of development and should reduce rezoning and variance requests. The RRC evaluation calls out new economy uses such as breweries and distilleries, film studios, research and development laboratories, and arts and culture uses for inclusion.

# CREATE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR ZONING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

Recognizing that a coherent public realm is an important part of an appealing business district, design guidelines are sometimes best applied by corridor rather than attached to districts. Clear regulation should support the character of each major business corridor.

# **MODERNIZE INDUSTRIAL ZONING**

The industrial zoning category should be improved to require adequate frontage on major streets, landscaping and stormwater management, and sensitive treatment of neighboring streets. It should also realistically address the effect of marijuana legalization on the value and potential for reuse of industrially zoned property.

# **CREATE A NEW RESIDENTIAL INFILL ZONING CATEGORY**

This category should enable zero lot line development, attached townhomes of 3-4 stories, smalle lot widths, and rear parking where possible.

### DEVELOP A FLEXIBLE PARKING STRATEGY.

Development proposals sometimes do not move forward due to a stringent combination of firm requirements and constrained space. Developing a strategy that builds in flexibility allows for parking relief and customized approaches. The strategy should include residential areas, where the tight fabric also presents contraints.

# SUPPORT NONMOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

Provisions for bicycle parking, required pedestrian connections and amenities, and credit for proximity to transit major support local and regional investments in these modes and increase business accessibility. In addition to these citywide provisions, overlay standards which provide for access, lighting, and other amenities along major nonmotorized corridors should be considered.

# STRENGTHEN LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS.

Landscaping serves to manage stormwater, increase property values, and provide both ecosystem services and beautification to the public realm, and the tool for implementing it on commercial and industrial property is the zoning ordinance. Standards for native landscaping, rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs, permeable pavement, and tree preservation are identifed as desirable by RRC.

# **REVIEW AND UPDATE DEFINITIONS.**

Many definitions are currently too vague or too specific. Reviewing and updating all definitions, using the American Planning Association dictionary as a guide, will reduce confusion and increase clarity in the zoning ordinance.

# ESTABLISH CONSISTENT ENFORCEMENT.

Zoning enforcement is currently haphazard and sporadic. Establishing and adhering to consistent enforcement will set the standard for development and property maintenance in Hamtramck.

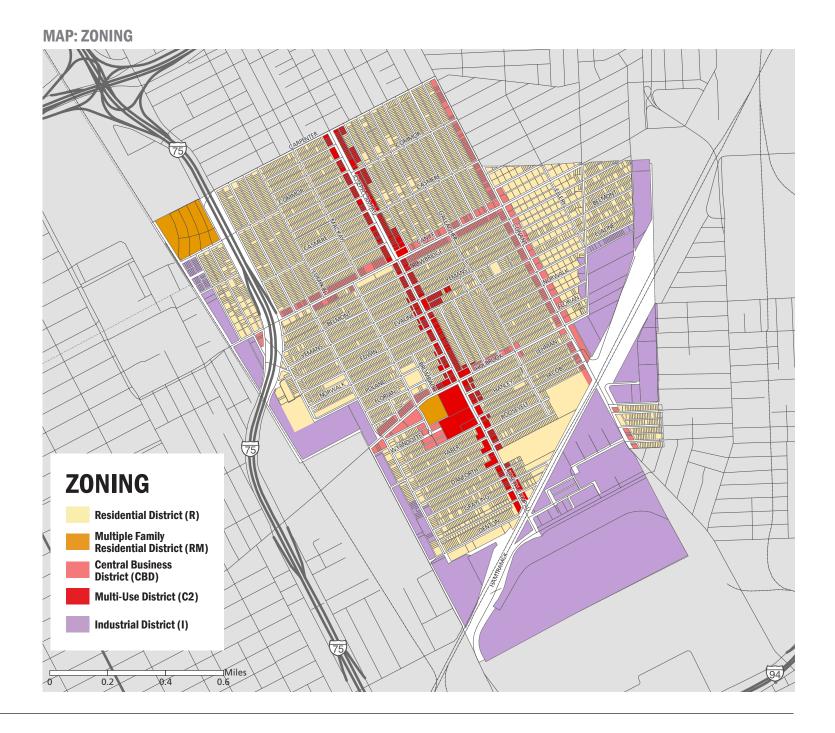
# **FUTURE LAND USE**

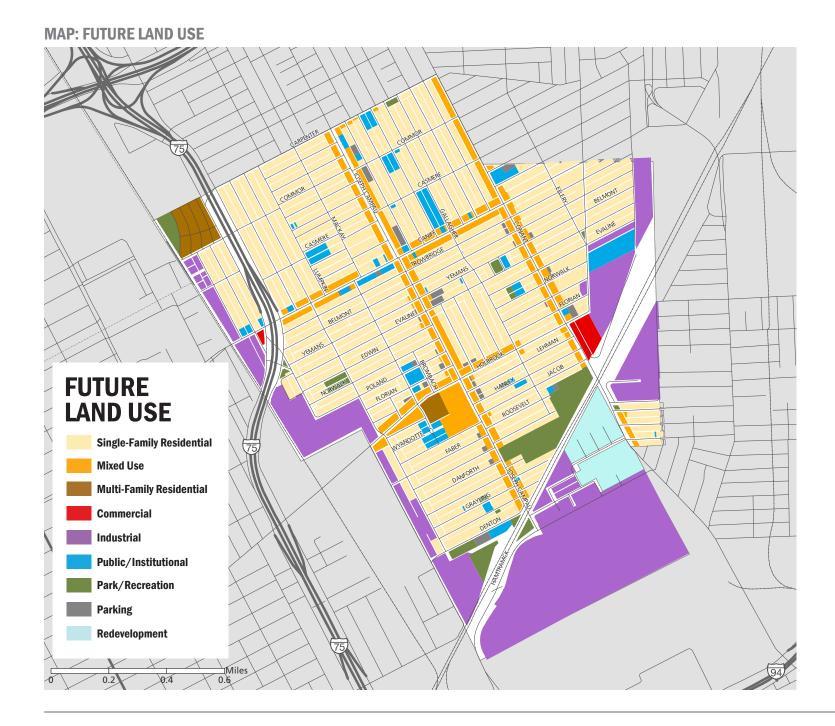
As a long-standing community, development patterns in Hamtramck are firmly established. There are, however, areas that are ripe for redevelopment, predominantly properties that were previously industrial in use. The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) on the following page is a tool that helps the City visualize how it should develop over time. Unlike a zoning map that is designated on a parcel-by-parcel basis to adhere to the legally binding zoning ordinance, the FLUM provides direction on how Hamtramck should develop to align with community preferences, local conditions, and best planning principles. It should be consulted when considering rezoning requests and land use changes in order to ensure that the changes help Hamtramck move toward its desired future.

The FLUM in this update has not substantially changed from the 2010 map with the exception of the study area defined by the South Hamtramck Subarea Plan. The table provided here relates the FLUM categories to the zoning districts that are currently shaping their development.

# TABLE: FUTURE LAND USE TO ZONING CATEGORIES

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY	CURRENT ZONING CATEGORY			
Single-Family Residential	Residential District (R)			
Multi-Family Residential	Multiple Family Residential District (RM)			
Mixed Use	Central Business District (CBD) & Multi-Use District (C2)			
Commercial	Central Business District (CBD) & Industrial District (I)			
Industrial	Industrial District (I)			
Public/Institutional	Residential District (R) & Industrial District (I)			
Park/Recreation	Residential District (R) & Industrial District (I)			
Parking	Multi-Use District (C2)			
Redevelopment	Industrial District (I)			





# **ACTION PLAN**

The Action Plan presented here (see 2019 Action Plan table) is meant to outline a course of action for the next five years which builds on the success of the 2010 Master Planning effort, addresses currently active issues in the community, and adjusts course where necessary. It combines findings from 2010 Matrix and contemporary assessment, the 2018 Redevelopment Ready Communities Baseline Assessment, a 2018 Community Conversation meeting held in conjunction with the Rising Tide program, the 2015-2025 Hamtramck Capital Improvement Plan, and the 2019 Master Plan Update steering committee.

# **TABLE: 2020 ACTION PLAN**

	PARTNERS
QUALITY OF LIFE	
Continue efforts aimed at improving the cleanliness of business and residential districts.	CM, CE, DDA, BC
Make the priority fixes and investments clear in a quarterly newsletter.	CM, DDA
PUBLIC SERVICES	
Continue staff cultural education trainings.	CM
Continue to prepare CIP and asset management plans to understand future infrastructure maintenance needs, and inform Wayne County of all plans.	CM, DPS, CED, DDA
TRANSPORTATION	
Establish a pedestrian advocacy group.	CM, PC, PAC, HRC
Continue to make alley improvements, and impelment standards for private alley activation (access, lighting, landscaping, etc.)	CM, CED, DDA, PC
Continue to establish institutional connections to Detroit's nonmotorized planners and resources.	PC, HRC
Pursue street reconstruction projects identifed in the 2015-2025 Capital Improvements Plan, including Caniff, Sobieski, Pulaski, Klinger, Dorothy, and Burger Streets.	CM, CED, DPS
Seek opportunities for temporary and permanent gateway improvements to North & South Campau, West Caniff, and I-75 at Nagel & Dequindre	CM, CED, DPS, ACC
CULTURAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
Complete a comprehensive zoning update	CM, PC
Develop site-specific visions for the Hamtramck Town Center and high-priority redevelopment sites.	CM, CED, DDA, PC
Maintain the "Welcome to Hamtramck" guide with current prodecures, resources, and other information.	CM, CED, DDA, AAC, BC, PD, LB
Provide translation services for development review, available upon request.	CM
Provide regular workshops on the process of starting a business, incluing the site plan review process.	DDA
Work toward a "one-stop" approach to business and development services	RRC
Review code requrements and develop "quick start" or "lite" development process.	CED, BD, PC
Support the creation of shared production spaces	CM, PC
HOUSING	
Develop a strong vision to integrate "missing middle" formats into the fabric of the community; promote that vision among reputable developers.	CM, CED
Undertake grass-roots comprehensive plans for neighborhoods.	CED, PC
Create a resource kit for potential landlords.	CM, CED, BD, CE
Support conversion or renovation of upper floors in commercial districts for residential use.	CM, DDA, BD, PC
PARKS & RECREATION	
Use the South Hamtramck Subarea Plan as an opportunity to support the fully revitalized Veteran's Park with parking, nonmotorized connections, and complementary residential and retail development.	CED, PC, PAC, HRC