

Brightmoor Restore the 'Moor Report



2014



LET

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2014 CDAD

Restore the 'Moor



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Executive Summary

Community Development Advocates of Detroit (CDAD) has been working with the Brightmoor Alliance and Brightmoor residents over the course of eight months to develop a block-level community revitalization plan. 'Restore the 'Moor' is the name given by the community to the plan and the planning process. Restore the 'Moor is intended to be a land use and quality of life plan that encompasses the various initiatives happening in the community and that builds on the community engagement that has occurred historically in Brightmoor. Brightmoor is a community rich with assets. Restore the 'Moor seeks to build upon and enhance those assets.

The land use plan developed by residents includes areas that will remain Traditional Residential, requiring fewer resources to remain sustainable. Other areas remain residential having larger lots and lower density. Areas that struggle with high vacancy are slated for alternative land uses such as urban farming, tourism and recreational spaces. Main corridors will be reconfigured to ensure that there are areas with vibrant shopping and others designed as safe travelling thoroughfares to more active areas.

During previous community engagement processes, the community identified several quality of life concerns that need to be addressed. Among these concerns include: employment, safety and security, education, blight/vacant land, services and programs and transportation. A variety of popular education techniques were employed during the process to develop a Resident Action Plan (RAP) that seeks to address community identified challenges and concerns. A number of innovative ideas arose during the community meetings including an eco-tourism initiative, growing and manufacturing herbs and herb related projects, development of a green thoroughfare and a local transportation initiative.

The following document provides a community snapshot of Brightmoor, an outline of the planning process and details of the Restore the 'Moor plan.

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Restore the 'Moor seeks to build upon and enhance those assets.

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Acknowledgements



CDAD would like to thank the following people and organizations for their immense contribution to the formation of the Restore the 'Moor plan:

Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation

for their continuous support for the Brightmoor community and for resources to support the Restore the 'Moor planning process.

Restore the 'Moor Steering Committee Members:

Bart Eddy—Detroit Community Schools

Cherie Bandrowski—Wellsprings Kumon Center

Dawn Wilson—Community Coach Small Grants program

Debra Andrews—Smith Homes

Ernestine Perkins—Stout Block Club

Harry Reisig—Replanting Roots

Jeff Adams—Brightmoor Alliance Board Chair

Jonathan Clark—Resident

Larry Simmons—Brightmoor Pastors Alliance

Leah Wiste—Neighbors Building Brightmoor

Phil Paxton—St Paul of the Cross Passionist Retreat Center

Rhonda Fadoir—Read Feed Seed

Riet Schumack—Neighbors Building Brightmoor

Roy Harlin—New Beginnings Block Club

The Brightmoor Campus of Redford Aldersgate United Methodist Church

Motor City Java House

Artists' Village

Brightmoor Community Center

Brightmoor Alliance staff

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Neighbors Building Brightmoor

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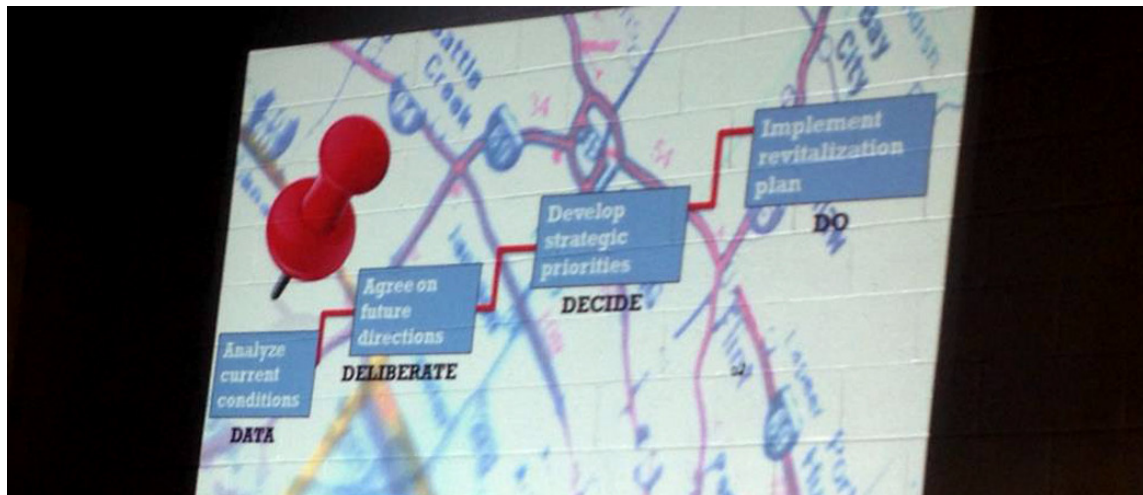
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Background Information

Community Development Advocates of Detroit (CDAD)

Strategic Framework planning in Brightmoor is the result of a partnership between Community Development Advocates of Detroit (CDAD) and Brightmoor Alliance. CDAD, its members and its supporters strive to serve as a catalyst for the transformation of Detroit neighborhoods. For more than 15 years, CDAD has served as the trade association for nonprofit, community-based development organizations in Detroit. Detroit is at a critical time in its history. Population loss, property value loss, abandonment, and the reality of a state appointed emergency manager are some of the challenges facing Detroit neighborhoods and residents. CDAD is stepping forward in a variety of ways to address these challenges including expanded membership, Strategic Framework, a community-based planning tool, community development Systems Reform initiative and public policy advocacy. CDAD is working to support neighborhood efforts to improve our communities.

CDAD, its members and its supporters strive to serve as a catalyst for the transformation of Detroit neighborhoods.



What is Strategic Framework?

The Strategic Framework (SF) community-based planning tool draws on the power of Detroit residents to shape their own neighborhoods. The SF helps transform the neighborhoods we see today into the place residents want it to be tomorrow.

It is important for neighborhoods to undergo this planning process because the end will result in:

- **A Shared Vision:** A community plan encourages partnerships and prevents wasted resources if everyone is working towards the same goals along the same timeline.
- **Credibility:** When neighborhood groups share a plan created by meaningful civic engagement, others (funders, the City, for example) take note.
- **Advocacy:** It's easier to take a stand for a neighborhood vision if it's a shared vision. Neighborhood stakeholders can identify and work to change the policies that would interfere with the accomplishment of their neighborhood plans—allowing that vision to be a strong basis for advocacy.
- **Motivation and Opportunity:** At the conclusion of the Strategic Framework process, the community has created a plan it can implement. That plan becomes a beacon for anyone who cares about the neighborhood to get involved and help move the plan forward.

Strategic Framework includes the use of a current conditions analysis and land use typologies. CDAD's current conditions analysis is crucial for developing knowledge about the state of communities today. This information can be used to make decisions about cost effective future investment in Detroit neighborhoods based on data. This analysis will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to work together to decide how to invest scarce resources in Detroit neighborhoods. Areas that are experiencing high levels of vacancy and population loss will likely need more investment over time in order to create new, activated public spaces. More stable areas will likely require fewer resources to stabilize.

In addition to the current conditions analysis, CDAD has developed land use typologies in order to provide a range of appropriate options for future land use. These typologies are used during the planning process by the community to create plans for the future of their neighborhoods. The typologies outline a variety of land use options and range from 'green' typologies for use in low and very-low density areas, residential, commercial and industrial typologies.

During the SF process, residents and stakeholders review current conditions maps and learn what the data say about the neighborhood. This process encourages shared analysis which will help people make decisions about the most appropriate and realistic plans for the future of their neighborhoods.

SF plans put the expertise of residents and stakeholders at the center of planning efforts. CDAD believes that nobody knows communities better than the people that live there. SF by design also builds long-term relationships based on trust between residents and stakeholders. These long-term relationships form the foundation for resident participation in design, planning and implementation, assuring resident 'buy-in' and relevance of plans.

CDAD firmly believes that communities should make the decision whether to enter into a planning process. As such, communities that want to implement an SF process are charged with contacting CDAD. In the past, the convener has been a CDO working in the neighborhood. The convening organization develops a local Steering Committee which guides that process by developing a community engagement strategy, defining engagement zones, facilitating public meetings and working with CDAD to develop meeting agendas. CDAD supports the work of this Steering Committee by providing technical assistance with the planning process, land use typologies, workshop design, community engagement strategy development and local data.

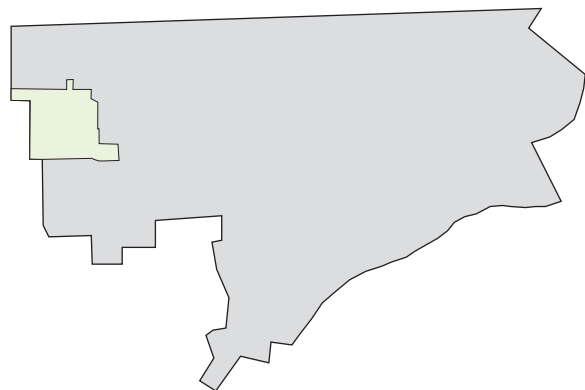
In the autumn of 2012, Brightmoor Alliance contacted CDAD about developing a partnership to implement the SF process in the Brightmoor community. SF began in Brightmoor in March of 2013.



Strategic Framework plans put the expertise of residents and stakeholders at the center of planning efforts.

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Brightmoor Community Snapshot



Location Map

The Brightmoor neighborhood is located on the very western edge of Detroit. It is home to 12,836 residents¹. It is bordered on the East by Evergreen, Grand River, West Outer Drive, Grandville and the Southfield Freeway, and on the West by the Detroit city limits. The Northern border is West McNichols Road, while the railroad tracks and I-96 serve as the community's boundary to the South.

Brightmoor, like many neighborhoods in Detroit has many different facets. Just the very name of the community conjures up many images. The community faces numerous challenges including blight, crime, poverty, population loss and few of social services. As of 2010, Brightmoor's vacancy rate was 29.4%, double the rate since 2000. In 2010, there were 1,215 vacant properties and 442 parcels categorized as vacant, open and dangerous. In addition to the high vacancy rate, Brightmoor's poverty rate based on 2010 census data is 42.5% compared to 33.2% for the city as a whole.

Despite this, Brightmoor remains a resilient and innovative community, home to numerous community groups and organizations building community and literally changing the landscape. Included in Brightmoor's changing landscape are: bees, public art, a butterfly garden, an outdoor theatre, a chalkboard house, goats, numerous gardens and children's art adorning the wood of boarded up houses.

The biggest asset in Brightmoor remains its resilient and innovative residents who call it home. Brightmoor is home to several community-based organizations and groups that work hard to transform the physical, social and political landscape of the community. Groups like the Brightmoor Pastors' Alliance, Neighbors Building Brightmoor, Motor City Blight Busters, and numerous block clubs and social services contribute to positive change occurring in the community. In addition to the social capital in Brightmoor, its physical landscape is another asset. Brightmoor has a unique landscape, which includes the Rouge River, Eliza Howell Park and rolling hills, more in line with a rural landscape than urban Detroit.

¹. Data Driven Detroit, Brightmoor Community Needs Assessment; www.datadrivendetroit.org

². Data Driven Detroit, Brightmoor Community Needs Assessment; www.datadrivendetroit.org

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Funding Support in Brightmoor

Brightmoor is one of the Skillman Foundation's Good Neighborhoods. Skillman Foundation launched its Good Neighborhoods initiative in 2006. The goal is to "transform Detroit's neighborhoods into healthy, safe and supportive environments for children, youth and their families by working directly with concerned citizens and organizations in specific neighborhoods.' The Foundation encourages partners in each of the communities to develop stronger partnerships between community leaders, community organizations, youth and families in order to create positive change in the community.²

Brightmoor is also fortunate to have the support of the Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation since 2008. The focus of this funding has been education of children under five years old. The Fisher Foundation has provided funding for an Outreach Director who has been a support for the Restore the 'Moor initiative. Restore the 'Moor is the name the community chose for the Brightmoor Strategic Framework process.

Other funders who are supporting the Brightmoor community include:

W.K. Kellogg Foundation, United Way for Southeastern Michigan, Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan, PNC Foundation, DTE Energy, UAW, Ford Foundation, AmeriCorps Vista, Max and Anna Levinson Foundation, Mandell L. and Madeleine H. Berman Foundation and Knight Foundation.



³.www.skillman.org

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Current Planning Climate

Brightmoor Alliance and CDAD were both committed to working with DFC to ensure that community plans are recognized and compatible while honoring the wishes of the community.

Restore the 'Moor began prior to the announcement of the Emergency Financial Manager and after the launch of Detroit Future City. Both of these realities have weighed on the planning process.

The delegation of a state-appointed emergency financial manager has led to many questions about the viability of a community-led planning process. Participants had many questions about how this would affect any efforts to implement a plan. Steering Committee members encouraged residents to create a realistic and community-driven plan. Time during each community meeting was carved out to discuss the current planning climate and how the Restore the 'Moor plan fits into a larger context.

Much work was done to differentiate the SF process from the DFC process. At each community meeting time was allotted to talk about the differences between the two processes and the opportunities to create plans compatible with DFC. Residents were assured that Brightmoor Alliance (BA) and CDAD were both committed to working with DFC to ensure that community plans are recognized and compatible while honoring the wishes of the community.

On numerous occasions, residents expressed some concern that they have 'been through all this before'. The resulting community engagement strategy concentrated on rallying the community under a new moniker, Restore the 'Moor, to create a participatory planning process that involved residents in a way they had not been involved previously.

The City of Detroit approached CDAD and BA with a suggestion of how they could be involved in the process. The City's Planning and Development Department assigned a city planner to support the Restore the 'Moor process. The planner has been to each public meeting and is working with the committee to explore the possibility of the community plan being added as an amendment to the city's Master Plan of Policies.

07

What does CDAD's current conditions analysis say about Brightmoor?

Current Conditions Analysis

CDAD's current conditions neighborhood analysis shows a community with a variety of residential, commercial and industrial uses and conditions. The map (Figure 01) illustrates an analysis based on several data sets including: population density, rate of population loss or gain, housing condition ratings, estimated housing values, density of housing structures, housing occupancy rates and parcel ownership type. The analysis shows that Brightmoor has areas that:

- Remain traditional residential areas with moderate density and occupied houses on every block.
- Have moderate to low density of housing.
- Have very low density with high vacancy rates
- Commercial corridors that are thriving and provide goods and services to the community.
- Commercial corridors that house many vacant businesses.



CDAD Current Conditions

Brightmoor Community

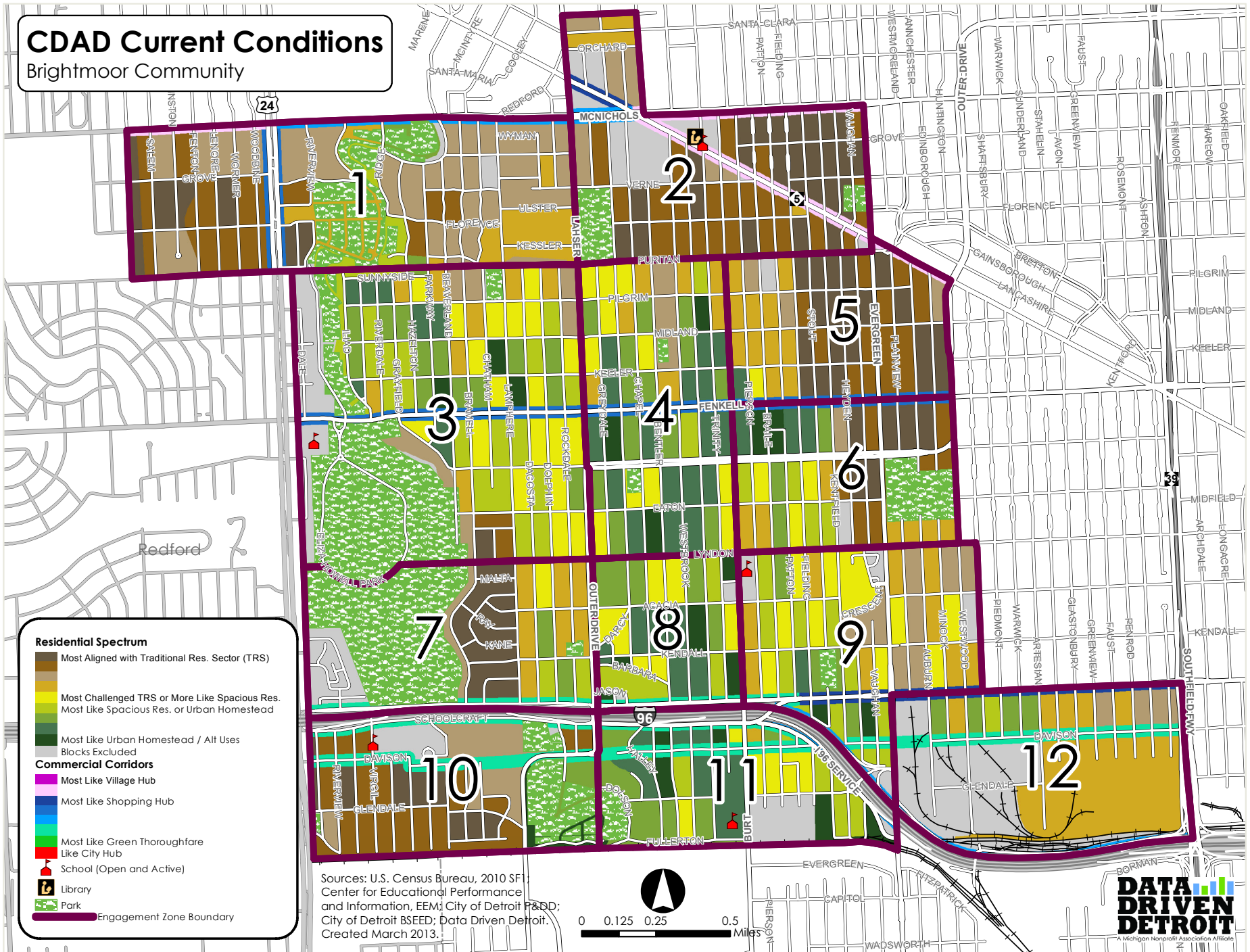


Figure 01 is the map of the neighborhood analysis that residents used to create the future directions maps which articulate their vision for the community.

08

Restore the 'Moor Process

The convening organization for Restore the 'Moor is the Brightmoor Alliance (BA). The role of the Alliance during the 'Restore the 'Moor process has been to coordinate a resident Steering Committee, support the community engagement process, organize community-wide public meetings and smaller community meetings and work with the community to increase understanding about the importance of planning.

The SF process is lead by a Steering Committee comprised of stakeholders and residents. The SC for Brightmoor's SF process decided early on to use the moniker 'Restore the 'Moor' instead of SF. This was in order to create excitement and a brand under which to organize planning efforts. Restore the 'Moor was an eight-month planning process that comprised a robust community engagement process which included key informant interviews, community wide meetings, small zone meetings and barbeques, block club meetings and door-to-door engagement. BA staff worked with members of the SC to implement the engagement strategy. Special attention was paid to areas with very little population density in order to ensure representation from those areas. Residents felt uncomfortable planning for areas where there was little or no representation.

The engagement strategy was designed to create as many 'points of entry' into the process as possible. Over 1200 residents have been engaged in the Restore the 'Moor process. During the process, residents were asked multiple questions about the community. What do they like about the community? What would they change if they could? What are assets in the community? What is missing in the community? What should be done with vacant land and property? How could land and property be used to address other priorities in the community? How do they want to be involved long-term? Who else needs to be involved?

The following methods were used to elicit participation:

During five large public meetings, residents reviewed CDAD's neighborhood analysis maps and learned what the data illustrate about the community. They then designed their own future directions maps for the community, answering questions such as how should land be used in the future? Following the development of the Future Directions Maps, residents identified short-term and long-term actions that were priorities for action and subsequently designed a revitalization plan for Brightmoor.

Restore the 'Moor was an eight-month planning process that included a robust community engagement process which included key informant interviews, community wide meetings, small zone meetings and barbeques, block club meetings and door-to-door engagement.

Smaller meetings were used to check in with the community and clarify any areas of dispute within particular zones. These smaller meetings were also designed to create more intimate conversations and bring the discussion 'to the ground'. This was done in order to create a more intuitive process for residents to understand current conditions maps and to design future directions maps.

In some areas, Steering Committee members went door-to-door to ask residents their opinions about vacant land use in their area (this was done in areas where there was little participation in the public meetings due to very low population density).

Residents were asked about their opinions for vacant land use during several community events put on by organizations represented on the community Steering Committee.

Over 1200 residents have been engaged in the Restore the 'Moor process.



09

Future Land Use Maps

The Future Directions Land Use Map (figure 02) on the following page represents the 15-year vision Brightmoor residents have for land use in their community. Many ideas emerged from the planning process. This map highlights where residents felt specific land use typologies were appropriate for the community. The map illustrates a range of residential, green, commercial and industrial land use typologies.

TR

Traditional Residential (TR) areas were identified as TR areas on the Current Conditions Map, which can be seen in the Community Snapshot (Section 04). Decisions were made to use resources to sustain and strengthen these areas in order to preserve the TR characteristics.

Ideas for TR areas: strengthen block clubs, code enforcement, tool lending, foreclosure counseling, energy cost assistance, landlord and tenant education, tree trimming, neighborhood clean ups, housing rehab funding.

SR

Spacious Residential (SR) areas where there is lower density than TR but there are houses on every block. Residents will be able to maintain their housing while having very large side lots or backyards that can be used for a variety of purposes such as building a garage, gardening or recreation areas.

Ideas for SR: controlled demolition, city upkeep of city property, side lotting program, code enforcement, neighborhood clean ups, parcel bundling, gardening, expanding property, sheep for grazing grass, etc.

UH

Urban Homestead (UH) areas that are appropriate for country living in the city. These are areas with low or very low vacancy that residents still wanted to maintain as residential in the future. Land can be used for a variety of purposes including gardening, recreation areas, storm water run off, sheep for grazing grass, etc.

Ideas for UH: gardening for home consumption and sale, resident security patrols, tree trimming, community tours, land bundling, side lotting, animals for grazing, etc.

NS

Naturescapes (NS) are areas that offer beautiful, low-maintenance, managed natural landscapes intended to bolster air and water quality, and support indigenous wildlife. No one lives in these areas – they have been reinvented to highlight and preserve special natural indigenous features and plant/animal species. Uses can be active or passive and can include creation of scenery, urban parks, walking trails, etc.

Ideas for NS: Community-designed parks, storm water runoff (swales, plants, pervious pavement, etc.), walking trails, art walks, urban forests, flower gardens, etc.

GV

Green Ventures (GV) areas are “green and blue” industrial areas that have been reinvented from vacant land and vacant industrial buildings to economic generators. No one lives in these zones, but they are well managed, safe, and create jobs for local residents in farming, warehousing and logistics, forestry, horticulture and fish production.

Ideas for GV: commercial gardening (such as herbs like lavender and chamomile and other low-level plants), community eco tour business (including uses for vacant land use like adventure/sports areas), marketing new green businesses, bee keeping and honey production, conversion of property or properties into businesses associated with eco tourism such as bed and breakfast, cooperative restaurant, goats for goat milk, marketing, land bundling, etc.

SH

Shopping Hubs (SH) are “node” shopping centers on an existing commercial corridor, to comparison-shop on the weekend, buy large-ticket items, or make a quick stop at the cleaners, donut shop or grocery store before or after work.

Ideas for SH: reserved space for businesses that stem from Green Venture areas such as coop grocery store, pop up stores, working to attract new businesses to fill in commercial gaps, work to relocate businesses from other less dense corridors.

GT

Green Thoroughfares (GT) are well-lit traveling corridors, flush with trees and other low-maintenance foliage. These corridors provide tasteful way finding directions to nearby neighborhoods, separate incompatible uses, and convey a sense of beauty, safety and spaciousness. Bus and bike lanes help form complete streets. They are distinguished from “Nature Scape” areas in that they are auto and/or mass transit corridors, not intended for visitors or recreation.

Ideas for GT: art-lined corridors, low-maintenance plants and trees (mix of heights to ensure clear sight-lines), bike lanes, widened sidewalks, new cross walks, speed bumps to reduce speed, increased signage, etc.

IN

Industrial Areas (IN) are heavier industrial areas, buffered by Naturescapes and Green Job Zones because of their typical disruptive environmental factors such as noise, heavy truck traffic and various forms of pollution.

Ideas for Industrial: businesses associated with Green Venture areas – e.g. manufacturing dried spices or tea and other things like tomato sauce production, solar panel production, etc.

CDAD Future Directions Brightmoor Community

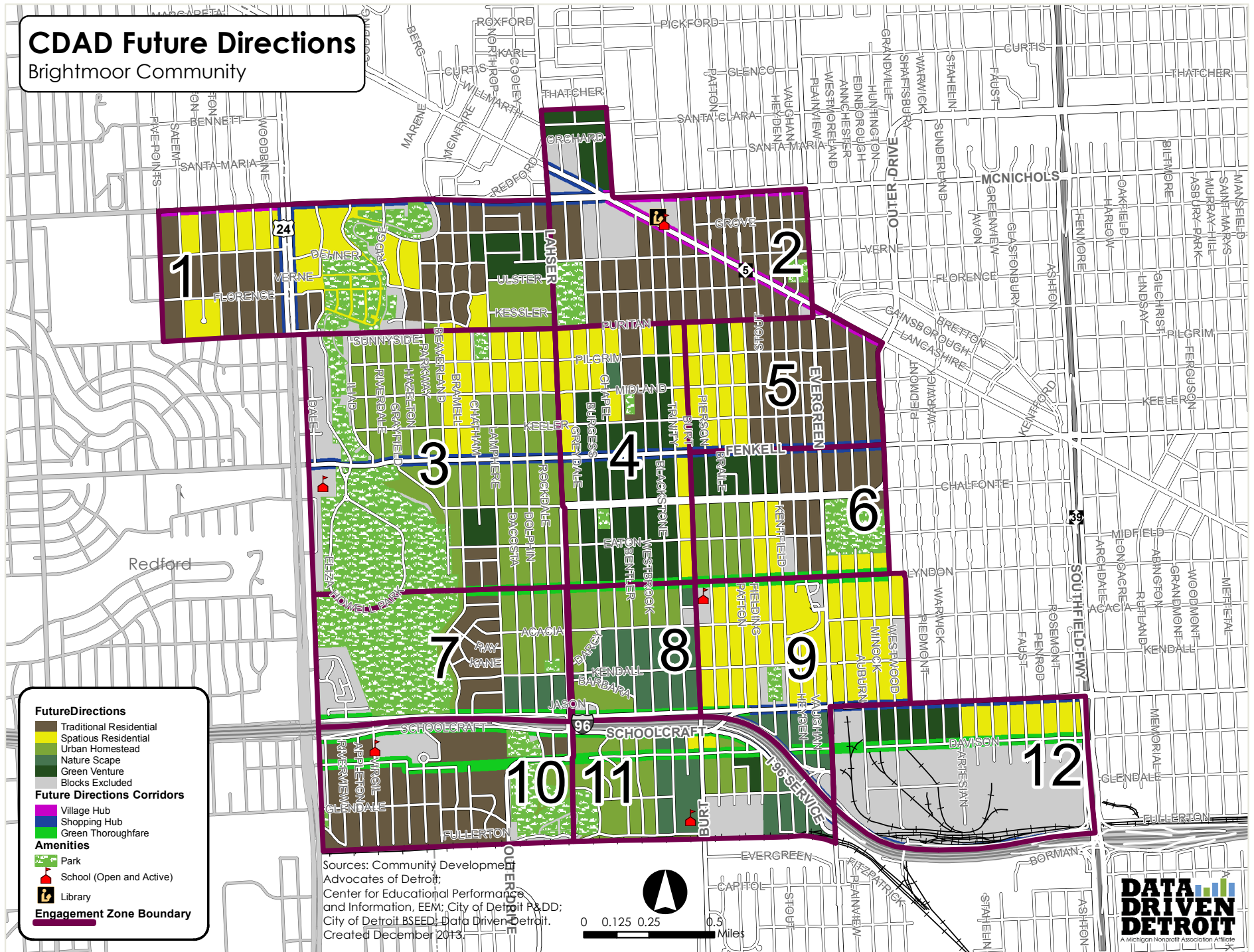


Figure 02

10

Resident Action Plan (RAP)

In order to honor the previous work of the BA, Restore the 'Moor built upon previous engagement initiatives in the community. During these previous engagement initiatives, the community identified the following areas as priorities for action moving forward: safety, blight, employment education, new services and programs, access to existing programs, transportation. Residents participated in a number of popular education activities to develop the Brightmoor RAP.



1 Safety and Security:

Safety and Security has been identified as a major challenge for residents living in Brightmoor. Residents have expressed that safety needs to be addressed in order to build a stronger foundation for the future by retaining existing residents and attracting new residents. The physical landscape of the community lends itself to opportunities for crime. Residents speak of issues such as squatting, shootings, sexual assault, robbery, muggings and home invasions. A broad definition of crime prevention should be employed in order to increase a sense of safety and security. Methods including crime prevention through environmental design, increased lighting, eliminating blind spots and trimming trees should be considered along with safety patrols and traditional safety initiatives involving the police.

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
1a	Reclaiming Outdoor Space: residents have identified a need to reclaim outdoor space as a cost-effective way to increase safety and security in the community. Reclaiming outdoor space can be loosely defined as using public space in groups in order to deter crime. A good example of this is Neighbors Building Brightmoor. Residents repeatedly identified their work as a crime deterrent – by working in groups outside, it becomes difficult for criminals to operate in the area. Specific ideas include starting walking groups, gardening, sports, and public arts.	A number of initiatives can be developed over the next 12 months.	Skillman Foundation’s Good Neighborhood Small Grants, existing community groups, Brightmoor Alliance, local Churches and interested residents.
1b	Crime Prevention Workshops: organizing crime prevention workshops with DPD and others in order to increase residents’ knowledge about crime prevention. Identified topics include: personal safety, women’s safety, preventing robbery, bus stop safety, safety and community design and cyber safety.	3-5 workshops can be organized in the first year	Detroit Police Department, Michigan State Police, Neighbors Building Brightmoor, Detroit 300, Broken Windows, Prevention Institute, Detroit Crime Commission
1c	Public Education Materials: residents repeatedly spoke of how difficult it is to access official information. The specific theme of information related to crime and neighborhood upkeep was mentioned. Residents mentioned wanting information about neighborhood crime stats, how to deal with squatters, who to call about code enforcement and information about how to buy vacant property.	A number of public education materials can be developed and existing resources can be distributed throughout the community in the next year.	City of Detroit, Detroit Police Department, Detroit Fire Department, Detroit Vacant Property Campaign, Black Family Development Inc, post secondary student interns
1d	Building stronger relationships with police: residents expressed desire to have regularly scheduled meetings with all levels of the Detroit Police Department. The purpose of these meetings would be to build bridges between the community and police and to keep residents informed about any issues arising in the community. A particular interest in hosting roundtable discussions between local business and police was raised as a specific action.	This is an initiative that can start in the short-term but will require ongoing relationship building.	Detroit Police Department, local businesses, Churches

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
1e	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design/Safety Audits: it is imperative to residents that all areas of the community are deliberately planned to increase safety. Specific ideas include working with design experts to create specific, on the ground plans that are designed with clear sight lines and few hiding spots and to hold safety audits in each area of the community in order for residents to participate in the design process. Safety audits also result in a written account of safety and design concerns that can be presented to various stakeholders and funders.	2-5 years will be required to conduct safety audits and create on the ground plans to design a safe community	DPD, Comstat, colleges and universities, Detroit Collaborative Design Center, Hamilton Anderson, CDAD
1f	Deal with blight issues: See section on Blight and Vacant Land		
1g	Radio Patrols: residents expressed desire for training and education about developing radio patrols for various areas in the community with the goal being that each area is patrolled. A mix of paid and unpaid patrols were identified.	1-3 years to develop radio patrols throughout the community.	Detroit Police Department, City of Detroit, Existing radio patrols (e.g. Greenacres Woodward Radio Patrol, Castle Rouge, Rosedale Park), Smith Homes Parent Group, 300 Detroit
1h	Building stronger relationships with City Hall: work to ensure community advisory council get established, encourage people to participate and ensure that Restore the 'Moor is a standing item on the agenda.	Can start in the first year but will require long-term commitment	Councilman James Tate, CDAD, City staff at various departments
1i	Support the Scrap Metal Regulatory Package Act: (proposed by Representative Rashida Tlaib) The Act proposes to regulate the sale and purchase of scrap metal in an effort to reduce the impact of illegal scrap theft and sale on communities.	1 year	Rep. Rashida Tlaib
1j	Home rehabilitation program: to stabilize traditional residential and spacious residential areas. Many homes in Brightmoor are located in areas that are slated to become traditional residential or spacious residential. Many of these homes are salvageable and would make good candidates for rehabilitation.	Ongoing	Planning and Development, MSHDA PIP program, GRDC Home Rehabilitation Program

2 Transportation:

Many people in Brightmoor work outside of the community and rely on public transportation to get to their jobs. Reliable transportation is seen as an important equity issue connected to employment opportunities around the region. Bus service currently runs on major streets in Brightmoor but service improvements were requested along Fenkell. Safe bus stops were also identified as being important. Residents also expressed that local routes within Brightmoor residential areas are a priority and have identified working with the local churches for use of their buses as a potential informal bus service running within Brightmoor.

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
2a	Supporting regional transit efforts: residents expressed the importance of getting involved in the conversations and planning around regional transit as a means of working toward achieving better transportation to areas with more jobs. The cost and time investment of attending meetings outside the community were identified as barriers to attendance.	1-5 years	Regional Transit Authority, Transportation Riders United, DDOT, MDOT
2b	Local bus routes: work with the Brightmoor Pastors' Alliance to devise a program to use Church buses to provide informal bus routes within the interior streets of Brightmoor. A partnership with a university or college to work with transportation planners will be necessary.	2-5 years	Brightmoor Pastors' Alliance, colleges and universities, Detroit Bus Company
2c	Safe bus stops with seats: the importance of personal safety while using public transportation and waiting for public transportation emerged as a theme. Residents would like manicured spaces with clear sight lines and few 'blind spots' for people to hide in as well as comfortable seating.	2-4 years will be required to develop safety plans around bus stops and to create seating	Doorstops Detroit, Charles Molnar (creates benches from reclaimed wood), Brightmoor Woodworkers, Reclaim Detroit, DDOT, MDOT

3 *Blight & Vacant Land Use:*

Blight remains a major concern for residents living in Brightmoor. While some view blight as an opportunity to create new public spaces, it remains a concern in the community. Blight contributes to concerns around safety, dumping, beautification, property values, difficulty attracting new residents and businesses as well as contributing to anxiety in the community. A number of innovative ideas for use of vacant land and property emerged during the planning process.

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
3a	Develop a community-based plan to use vacant land: As residents gathered to discuss their community, residents reiterated the importance of developing a comprehensive plan for the community. Developing this plan has been the crux of Restore the 'Moor.	1 year	CDAD
3b	Ownership of vacant land and property remain a mystery to residents: Great emphasis was placed on demystifying the process of identifying owners of vacant properties. Residents are interested in working with the city, State and banks to streamline a process of identifying landowners. Once owners are identified, there may be opportunity to enforce property codes and buy and sell property.	2-5 years	Loveland, Michigan Land Bank, Detroit Land Bank, Vacant Property Coalition
3c	Developing a community-wide tool lending program: where residents can borrow tools for use in maintaining vacant property and performing small repairs on occupied housing and to board up vacant properties.	1-4 years	Neighbors Building Brightmoor, Lowe's, Home Depot, Detroit Hardward, Habitat ReUse Center, residents who are willing to donate tools
3d	Organize more regularly scheduled clean up days: with big dumpsters available. These should be coordinated with the City to ensure dumpsters are picked up in a timely fashion.	Ongoing	Block clubs and community groups, city of Detroit, Retread Detroit
3e	Sell/Give vacant lots to community groups: that are already working to maintain them or have specific plans to maintain them. There are a number of groups in the community who have started maintaining and activating vacant lots. These initiatives serve as important public safety and community building initiatives that have benefitted the Brightmoor community. Residents would like to protect these initiatives from the real estate market and be given the right of first refusal for purchase at a very discounted rate and/or given the land for free of charge.	Ongoing	Loveland, Michigan Land Bank, Detroit Land Bank, various banks, City of Detroit, Councilman James Tate, Vacant Property Coalition
3f	Research and develop cooperatively governed and/or owned land structures: Residents are interested in working with partners in the academic community to research models of residents cooperatively operating land while the land is owned by a third party as well as models where land is owned collectively by community groups or coalitions.	1-3 years	Colleges and universities, pro-bono legal services from private law firm, Vacant Property Coalition

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
3g	<p>Develop Green Thoroughfare: along Schoolcraft by encouraging businesses open in areas with predominantly vacant businesses to relocate to busier areas. Streets should be lined with sculptures as well as native plants and trees.</p>	1-5 years	CDAD, Michigan Community Resources, DCDC
3h	<p>Build on Lyndon Greenway Plan: on Lyndon connecting Eliza Howell Park to Stoepel Park. This initiative includes aesthetic elements incorporating art, plants and trails. Elements related to traffic safety are included as well, including more street lights, wider sidewalks, diagonal parking and speed bumps to reduce speed. The third element is functional improvements such as smooth sidewalks, benches, bike racks and trash bins. This initiative is similar to a Green Thoroughfare.</p>	5-7 years	CDAD, MCR, City of Detroit, Greening of Detroit, DFC, Councilman James Tate, Lower Eastside Action Plan, MSHDA, DLBA, MLB
3i	<p>Repurposing vacant schools in the area: Closed schools contribute to blight in a unique way. They illustrate the loss of a community space and loss of opportunity for young people. They also attract scrap thieves and can be used to provide shelter for squatters. A majority of these schools are unsalvageable as a result of scappers and fire. Residents would like to demolish unsalvageable schools and convert two salvageable schools into:</p> <p>Community hub: during the community engagement process, residents expressed the desire to create a 'third space' in the community that would allow residents to access a number of services under one roof, contribute to community engagement efforts and provide recreational activities for residents of all ages. Community hubs are a unique opportunity to bring new services and opportunities to underserved communities.</p> <p>Vetal School/Kindred Ministries initiative which will convert a vacant school into a Church and a training center for skilled trades. This initiative will contribute to several action items identified by the community: employment training, reuse of vacant property and bringing in new services into the community.</p> <p>Green Ventures: schools that are too damaged to salvage, should be demolished to create new Green Ventures. Land can be used to establish small farms, grow crops, create a teaching garden and sculpture park or create outdoor recreation space, such as outdoor adventure sports that will contribute to the eco tourism initiative.</p>	2-7 years	CDAD, Michigan Community Resources, Detroit Future City, Councilman James Tate, Greening of Detroit, School Boards
3j	<p>Schoolcraft and Davison Highway Green Thoroughfares: creating a green buffer from traffic and noise. This would also create a more attractive view of Brightmoor from I-96. The thoroughfares are surrounded by large urban homesteads and Naturescapes. Ideas for uses of Naturescapes include urban forests, dog park, walking trails and native plant gardens.</p>	3-7 years	CDAD, Michigan Community Resources, Detroit Future City, Councilman James Tate, Greening of Detroit, local businesses, MSHDA, DLBA, MLB

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
3k	Develop Shopping Hub: along Fenkell in order to strengthen current businesses and attract new business. New businesses should be invited and/or supported to open based on the needs of the community.	2-5 years	Local businesses, businesses that are interested in opening in Brightmoor, Tech Town, DHive, businesses from less active corridors, commercial landlords
3l	Use vacant land to create land-based jobs: such as farming and new recreation spaces (see employment section for more details).		
3m	Develop a grazing program: with sheep and goats as a low-cost method of maintaining grass, to provide recreational opportunities for young people (petting zoos, live nativity scene, etc.) and to provide opportunities for entrepreneurship.	1-3 years	Councilman James Tate, LEAP, Neighbors Building Brightmoor, Greening of Detroit, City of Detroit, Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice
3n	Allow neighbors to buy vacant lots: adjacent to their homes in order to increase property size. This would help maintain abandoned lots and provide extra space for homeowners who would like it.	1-3 years	City of Detroit, LEAP, Urban Neighborhoods Initiative (UNI), Detroit Land Bank, Michigan Land Bank, Vacant Property Coalition



4 Services & Programs:

Services and Programs were mentioned as badly needed amenities for residents living in Brightmoor. The conversations centered around: new services and programs needed, resident-led services and accessibility of current services.

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
4a	Youth Programming: Residents identified a number of new services and programs they feel would benefit youth in the community, including: etiquette classes, employment programs around blight remediation and vacant land, programming year round at Eliza Howell park. These programs are intended to build the capacity of young people to live fulfilling lives and to contribute to their communities.	1-5 years	Resident volunteers, Greening of Detroit, Skillman Small Grants, Youthville, NSO, Youth Development Coalition, Brightmoor Pastors' Alliance, public libraries, WARM Training
4b	Entrepreneurship Training: was identified as a crucial program for the community and residents of all ages. Residents expressed interest in learning about different business models and ownership structures, market research, registering a business and on-line business.	Ongoing	Tech Town, Grand Circus, DHive, Small Business Detroit Microloan Program, LaunchDETROIT
4c	Food co-operative: Food insecurity continues to be a concern for residents in Brightmoor as does access to good jobs. One idea to address both issues is to develop a food co-operative along the Fenkell corridor. This would provide jobs and business ownership to those who start the co-op as well as provide a good space to sell what they grow in green Ventures.	2-5 years	Center for Community Based Enterprise, Detroit Community Cooperative
4d	Food Pantry: Access to emergency food supplies was identified as an important food security issue for the community. A number of pantries exist in the community and a short-term action identified during the planning process was to promote existing food pantries before creating additional services.	1 year	Food pantries in Brightmoor, Brightmoor Alliance, Neighbors Building Brightmoor newsletter, Food Pantry Alliance, Catherine Ferguson Academy
4e	Free Health Clinic: Access to affordable health care is a challenge for many in Brightmoor. Residents suggested the idea of developing a free health clinic. A short-term idea may be to develop a new partnership with healthcare services to provide periodic free health services several times a year. New partnerships will need to be developed between public health, Brightmoor Alliance, and additional partners.	2-5 years	Department of Health, Beaumont, City Covenant, Henry Ford, Wayne State Health Education
4f	Resident-led services: The idea that residents have the skills to provide services and programs for the community came up repeatedly. Skillman Small Grants program was identified as a source of start-up money for such initiatives. Ideas such as programming at the park, exercise and walking groups, childcare and safety patrols were identified.	Ongoing	Brightmoor Alliance, Skillman Foundation Small Grants

5 Employment & Job Creation:

Employment/Job Creation: was identified as the dominant challenge facing Brightmoor. Residents are seeking a variety of opportunities to increase household income and find gainful employment. A number of creative ideas were posed to increase and create jobs in the Brightmoor area. Many ideas include entrepreneurship that will require a concerted effort to brand the community as a place to shop and do business.

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
5a	Using vacant land to create jobs: Many ideas were proposed for turning vacant land and buildings into income generators for residents and the community. A few specific ideas include: growing and drying herbs for making tea, creating an eco-tourism co-operative, using land to create an outdoor adventure area, growing tomatoes and manufacturing and selling tomato sauce, etc. (See Section 3 for more information.)	Ongoing	CDAD, MCR, Detroit Tourism, Architectural Salvage, Greening of Detroit, Reclaim Detroit, Catherine Ferguson Academy, Keep Growing Detroit, Michigan State University
5b	Creating local skills banks: where people can either trade or buy services from other residents in Brightmoor. A skills bank is an opportunity to promote the talents of local residents and to support entrepreneurs and barter for goods.	1 year	Local residents, block clubs
5c	Create Brightmoor Business Association: The idea of branding the business community in Brightmoor came up repeatedly under discussions about job creation and income generation. An organized association of businesses could assist members with zoning and permitting as well as advocating for new policy wherever necessary. A potential early action is to develop a Brightmoor Business Directory to promote the idea of 'shopping the block'.	1-2 years	Local businesses, block clubs, Southwest Detroit Business Association, Chamber of Commerce
5d	Job finding services and boards in the community: many job-seeking residents spoke of the difficulty of in accessing job postings. This speaks to potential gaps in policies around posting jobs and to diminished access and understanding of where and how to look for work. A local job finding club supported by an organization could help demystify the job search and increase access to job opportunities.	1-2 years	Libraries, job finding professionals, block clubs
5e	Create youth apprenticeships: Many participants shared stories about the barriers youth face to accessing the job market including lack of access to information, lack of transportation and experience to get jobs. An idea that arose was to develop a youth apprenticeship program to provide skills building opportunities to young people in a variety of different vocations.	1-4 years	Kindred Ministries, unions, trade associations, YouthVille, Chamber of Commerce

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
5f	Creation of workers' co-operatives: workers' co-ops were raised on several occasions as an example of a job creation initiative residents can create. Several ideas were proposed including: an eco-tourism company, manufacturing and selling produce grown locally, creating a local herbal tea company, deconstruction company, hardware store and food co-operative.	Ongoing	Center for Community Based Enterprise, Detroit Community Cooperative
5g	Community branding: came up repeatedly as a way to entice new employers to the community – as the community's changing reputation for innovation and creative solution building gains traction, there will be more opportunities to market it as a positive place to live and do business. One short term action includes updating the Brightmoor Alliance website.	Ongoing	College and university marketing programs, local and regional media, Detroit Bus Company, D-Hive
5h	Creation of 'shopping hub': along Fenkell as an area to attract new businesses to the community. The area should have identification markers illustrating it as a business area.	3-5 years	CDAD, Michigan Community Resources, businesses located on more vacant corridors, potential new businesses, DHive, Tech Town, Chamber of Commerce, City of Detroit
5i	Supporting Kindred Ministries initiative: which is a plan to convert Vetal School into a jobs training center and community safety hub. This initiative will not only provide new services to the community but also a new public space as well. This initiative has been identified as a way to actualize the community's desire for jobs training and community safety initiatives.	1-2 years	Brightmoor Alliance, colleges and universities
5j	Create youth apprenticeships: Many participants shared stories about the barriers youth face to accessing the job market including lack of access to information, lack of transportation and experience to get jobs. An idea that arose was develop a youth apprenticeship program to provide skills building opportunities to young people in a variety of different vocations.	1-4 years	Kindred Ministries, unions, trade associations, YouthVille, Chamber of Commerce

6 Education:

Education is the foundation for a strong future. Lack of educational opportunities diminishes opportunities and contributes to high crime, low financial achievement and is a deterrent to the economic well being of a community. This is true for children and adults. Residents expressed a desire for lifelong learning opportunities for themselves and their children.

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
6a	Create financial literacy classes: for youth and adults to instill a lifelong understanding of personal finance. Topics for training include budgeting, small business, banking and banking fees.	1 year	Local banks, Banking on our Future, Michigan Jump \$tart, Focus Hope
6b	Improving school attendance: by supporting and working with the Brightmoor Pastors' Alliance "Present in Brightmoor" initiative. The importance of improving attendance was identified for two reasons: to improve academic performance and to ensure that school-aged children are engaging in positive activities throughout the day.	Ongoing	Local schools, parents groups, block clubs, local businesses, Brightmoor Pastors' Alliance
6c	Improve post secondary education rates: by working with colleges to organize tours and information sessions for students from Brightmoor. Residents highlighted the importance of including students in college who have grown up in Brightmoor to participate in the information sessions.	Ongoing	Local schools, Detroit Community Schools, colleges and universities, Brightmoor post secondary student
6d	More tutors in schools: in order to help increase educational achievement at all levels. Tutors could be obtained through a partnership with local colleges and through Brightmoor residents who are willing to share their skills.	1-3 years	Resident volunteers, colleges and universities, Detroit Public Libraries, Kumon
6e	The importance of extra-curricular activities: arose on several occasions as opportunities to developing new skills and creative ways of thinking. Residents would like sports, culture, music, arts and academic programs. Local residents and volunteers could be tapped to share their skills with children in the community.	Ongoing	Detroit Parks Coalition, local residents who will share their talents, People for Palmer Park, Skillman Small Grants
6f	Create a dad's club: that is based at a local school in order to help facilitate the involvement of fathers in children's education and well-being and to provide a safe environment for fathers to get information about their concerns and needs. This would also provide an opportunity for men to receive information about issues of concern to them.	1-2 years	Dad's Club Inc., DPS Dad's Club, existing dad's clubs

	Action	Timeline	Potential Partners
6g	Develop parent resource center: at school that would be a place to for parents to find information about school and about topics of interest in the community such as foreclosure prevention, landlord and tenant law, food assistance programs, adult education, tool lending, safety, etc.	Ongoing	DPS Parent Resource Centers
6h	Formation of Community Roundtables: in conjunction with Present! In Brightmoor initiative to address systemic issues related to school attendance, access to post secondary education and development of indicators to track student success. Membership in Roundtables should include educational professionals at all levels, staff from neighborhood based organization working and parents.	Ongoing	Present! In Brightmoor, Brightmoor Pastors' Alliance, Brightmoor and Cody Rouge teachers and principals, parent councils





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Highlight of Ideas

Complete streets/Urban Homesteads on Outer Drive and Lyndon Greenway: residents wanted to keep this area residential but with the characteristics of a Green Thoroughfare that could be found on a commercial corridor. The plan includes making Outer Drive a 'complete street' with residential characteristics. A complete street provides accessible routes to users in cars, public transportation, walking, biking or using mobility devices. Residents also expressed an interest in completing and enhancing the current Green Thoroughfare along Lyndon Drive. Some specific design ideas include: hand crafted benches made from reclaimed wood from the community, bike trails, low-maintenance and low-lying plants and flowers, public art, wider sidewalks and speed bumps to reduce speed.

Eco-tourism initiative: Brightmoor residents and organizations are frequently asked to provide tours of the community to people from the city, the suburbs and visitors from around the world. The work happening in the community is inspirational and innovative and has become a symbol of the power of community to transform itself. Residents have acknowledged this as a new fact of living in Brightmoor. After much deliberation, residents came up with the idea of turning this new form of tourism into the Brightmoor Eco-Tourism and employment creation strategy. Plans include working on developing a route that highlights the work of residents, developing public art along the route and working with Tech Town to establish a business model for the co-operative tour business. Tech Town has also been identified as a partner to support the spin off businesses associated with small tourism industry (e.g. bed and breakfast, small restaurants, shops, etc.)

Workers' cooperatives have been identified as models of local job creation, which capitalizes on the assets in the community. Residents are interested in developing several cooperative businesses including:

- Cooperatively owned farm and manufacturing operation – co-op members would grow crops, manufacture into a specific product and sell at different venues in the city (one potential idea is to farm a crop that beautifies the community and can be manufactured into several different products such as lavender for tea and cosmetic products)

- Cooperatively owned grocery store specializing in locally crafted and grown foods.

- Eco-tourism initiative and businesses associated with (see above).

- A cooperative farm and a cooperatively owned manufacturing operation related to farming.



Public Art Project is an initiative funded by Knight Foundation Arts Challenge and will be implemented by Brightmoor Alliance. The purpose of this initiative is to revitalize public spaces in Brightmoor by replacing blight with public art. To date, a 14-block radius has been cleared of brush and debris and another 10 blocks will be cleared and 're-activated' with art. The Alliance will work with local artists and residents to reclaim outdoor space by using art to create safe and active public spaces. The public arts initiative serves to contribute to the goal of neighborhood beautification, reclaiming outdoor space, recreational opportunities for young people and creating art lined streets for the eco-tourism initiative.

Local bus routes (with pastors/Church buses): Transportation remains a challenge in Brightmoor. There are two main concerns with regards to transportation. Routes on the main corridors that provide service to the rest of the city and connections to suburban areas remain unreliable, which creates a barrier to employment and other opportunities outside the community. Another issue is difficulty getting around Brightmoor due to its size and safety concerns. This difficulty includes getting from within the community to bus stops on main corridors. Residents understand that DDOT and MDOT will likely not provide service within the smaller residential streets of Brightmoor. Residents would like to work with the Pastors' Alliance to develop a program where Church buses are used to provide local bus service within Brightmoor and to and from predetermined destinations such as grocery stores and youth programs.



Crime prevention through environmental design – residents are interested in developing a series of tools designed to work on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. CPTED is a deliberate approach to neighborhood safety, which seeks to identify and work on specific places in the community that may attract crime. Tools such as community safety audits can be employed to ensure residents are involved in identifying and implementing solutions.

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Compatibility with DFC

Detroit Future City identifies a number of future land use typologies for Brightmoor in its 50-year vision. The typologies identified during the Restore the 'Moor process are compatible with DFC in the short-term. Typologies move from the current condition of vacancy to alternative land use, traditional residential and green ventures all of which comply with the trajectory needed to implement DFC's long-term land use plan.



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Recommendations for Future Actions

Organize a public launch of the plan to funders, elected officials, residents, potential future partners and Detroit Future City.

Meet with funders, elected officials, potential future partners and Detroit Future City to explore how each can support the implementation of Restore the 'Moor through additional funds, support with policy considerations, new partnerships and endorsement.

Build upon partnerships with local colleges and universities in order to develop research internships to study the feasibility and legal issues surrounding cooperatively owned businesses, cooperatively governed and owned land structures and soil quality and contamination.

Build upon partnerships with local colleges, universities and non-profit organizations to implement certain aspects of Restore the 'Moor, including providing tutoring, afterschool extra-curricular activities, workshops in the community and expertise in crime prevention through environmental design and urban agriculture.

Continue to work with Planning and Development Department to include the plan into any amendments to the Master Plan of Policies. Work with CDAD's Strategic Framework Committee as a support in this endeavor.

Build partnership with LEAP implementation team to ensure shared policy issues are being addressed together (e.g. animals for grazing).

Set up working groups based on each priority comprised of residents, stakeholders, elected officials, staff from local organizations

Ensure Restore the 'Moor is a standing item on the District One planning group's agenda

Ensure Restore the 'Moor is a standing item on the District One Community Advisory Council

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Lessons Learned

Community engagement is at the heart of the Strategic Framework Process. It is of utmost important to create multiple 'entry points' into the process. Residents do not always have the time or will to participate in traditional meetings. Careful consideration should be taken of literacy issues, barriers to participation and ensuring that residents are aware of the process. In Brightmoor, multiple entry points into the process were created in order to ensure optimum participation. Residents were engaged through traditional community-wide meetings, block club meetings, community bbqs, interviews and door-to-door conversations.

It is important in communities that have many initiatives occurring simultaneously, that special effort is made to include these efforts into the planning process. Planning should not occur in a vacuum. In Brightmoor, the moniker Restore the 'Moor was used as an umbrella to capture the many different initiatives in the community.

Communities in Detroit have been working on creating positive change for decades. It is important to build on these initiatives in order to honor the work that has been done and to create a climate of inclusivity. In addition, the previous work of residents provides a process to build from. In Brightmoor, the previous work of the Brightmoor Alliance was used to create the Resident Action Plan.

Strategic Framework was created to be a block-level participatory planning process. This ensures a certain level of responsiveness to the wishes of the community. In Brightmoor, the community reacted negatively to the title "Strategic Framework" and voted to change the name of the process into something that would encourage more participation. The SF name was viewed as confusing in light of DFC and too much of a technical term. The name 'Restore the 'Moor' was developed during a Steering Committee meeting and discussed at a public meeting.

It is imperative for residents to have some idea of how the plan that results from their efforts will be used. Early on in the process, residents discussed different options for the plan once completed including: working with Planning and Development Department to use the plan as an amendment to the Master Plan of Policies, to attract new funding to the community, to attract new in-kind resources and to act as a blue print for the community in efforts to create positive change.

Communities in Detroit have been working on creating positive change for decades. It is important to build on these initiatives in order to honor the work that has been done and to create a climate of inclusivity.

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Contact Information

For more information on how you can support, get involved in, or ask questions about Restore the 'Moor, please contact Joe Rashid, Outreach Director for Brightmoor Alliance at:

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Brightmoor Restore the 'Moor Report

