



JEFFERSON CHALMERS NEIGHBORHOOD FRAMEWORK PLAN

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**COMMUNITY MEETING #4 – ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY**

FEBRUARY 16, 2019

## SUMMARY

The Jefferson Chalmers Neighborhood Framework Plan held its fourth Community Meeting Saturday, February 16 from 10:00am–2:00pm at the Salvation Army at 3000 Conner Street. As the final meeting in the planning process, this meeting intended to:

1. Review the purpose and scope of the Jefferson Chalmers Neighborhood Framework Plan:
  - a. Reiterate the goals, timeline, and expected outcomes for the neighborhood planning process
2. Recap where we are in the planning process
  - a. Summary of outreach methods and process to-date, including highlights from community input
3. Provide a summary of the final recommendations
4. Illuminate the “Next Steps” as this planning study ends and the implementation phase begins.
5. Allow for dialogue through an extended Question and Answer session, moderated by City of Detroit staff.

Upon arrival at the meeting, participants were asked to sign-in and were directed to the space where they were able to enjoy a breakfast buffet and coffee.

From 10:00am-12:00pm, attendees ate breakfast as they viewed the poster boards, which included a summary of engagement efforts throughout the project, a summary of the final recommendations complete with a Master Plan, and individual boards for 5 priority projects, which constitute the “Action Plan.” The Action Plan projects will be completed in the immediate term, within the next 3-5 years, so these projects required special attention.

At 12:00pm, the official presentation began, with a welcome and call to order, followed by a summary of the final recommendations, and then announcements.

The Final Recommendations build on the strengths of the neighborhood (East Jefferson Avenue, Neighborhood Fabric, and the Waterfront) and include:

### Rejuvenate Retail on East Jefferson Avenue:

1. Support Neighborhood-serving Retail on Jefferson
2. Build a Mixed-use Development at Jefferson and Piper
3. Enhance Jefferson Streetscape

### Stabilize Neighborhood Housing:

4. Rehab Land Bank-owned Vacant Houses
5. Re-purpose Guyton as Community Space and Affordable Housing
6. Preserve and Develop Affordable Housing

7. Establish a Conservation Overlay District
8. Stabilize High-Vacancy Areas

### Improve Walkability and Sustainability:

9. Improve Public Access to the Riverfront
10. Improve Public Access to the Canals
11. Improve Pedestrian Connections
12. Improve Streetscapes
13. Reuse Vacant Lots

From 12:30pm-1:30pm, the floor was open to questions from the audience for an extended Question and Answer session, moderated by the City project representatives.

At 1:30pm, the meeting came to a close, but the room was still open for a gallery-style discussion at the poster boards before attendees headed home.

Included below are the poster boards from the meeting, as well as a transcription of the Question and Answer period.



AN ATTENDEE REVIEWS THE MEETING MATERIALS, INCLUDING A SUMMARY OF THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS | COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVOCATES OF DETROIT

# PRESENTATION OF FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

## OPEN HOUSE BOARDS

During the open house hours of the meeting, before and after the formal presentation, attendees were welcome to view a series of poster boards that summarized the project and introduced the 5 priority projects included in the Action Plan.

The boards included the following:

1. Neighborhood Planning Process
2. What We Learned
3. What We Heard
4. Summary of Final Recommendations (1)
5. Summary of Final Recommendations (2)
6. Final Recommendation: Support Neighborhood-serving Retail on Jefferson
7. Final Recommendation: Build a Mixed-use Development at Jefferson and Piper
8. Final Recommendation: Rehab Land Bank-owned Vacant Houses
9. Final Recommendation: Re-purpose Guyton School as Community Space and Affordable Housing
10. Final Recommendation: Preserve and Develop Affordable Housing



ATTENDEES REVIEW THE POSTER BOARDS, INCLUDING A SUMMARY OF THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS | COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVOCATES OF DETROIT

Jefferson Chalmers Neighborhood Framework Plan

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# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROCESS

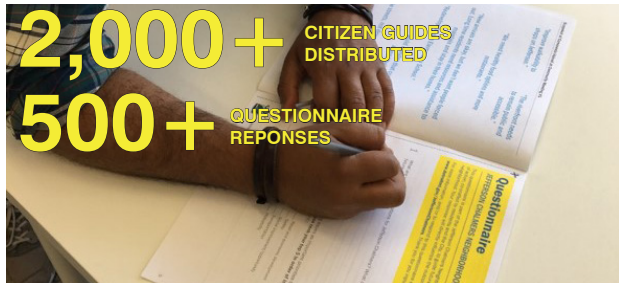
Jefferson Chalmers residents engaged with the neighborhood planning process in a variety of ways:



TOWN HALL MEETINGS



RESIDENTS IN ACTION COMMITTEE



CITIZEN'S GUIDE AND QUESTIONNAIRE



ORAL HISTORIES



JEFFERSON CHALMERS YOUTH COUNCIL



MANISQUE TREE HOUSE COOKOUT



OPEN HOUSE MEETINGS AT MONTEITH LIBRARY



FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

Meeting 1  
Project Kick-off  
March, 2018

LISTEN & LEARN

Meeting 2  
What We Heard  
July, 2018

DEVELOP INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Meeting 3  
Initial Recommendations  
October, 2018

REFINE INTO FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Meeting 4  
Final Recommendations  
February 2019

IMPLEMENT

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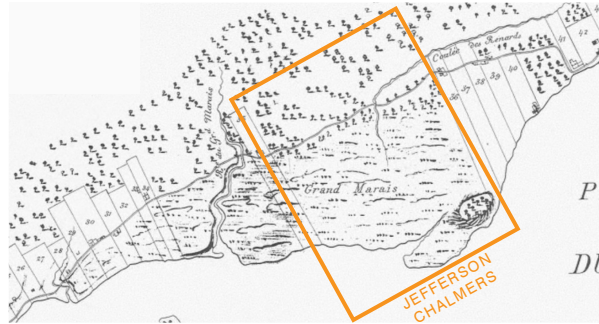
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# WHAT WE LEARNED

Through research and coordination, we learned some key points about your neighborhood:

## HISTORIC HYDROLOGY



HISTORIC MAP OF THE DETROIT RIVERFRONT

Jefferson Chalmers is located on what was historically low-lying marshland named by French settlers as the Grand Marais or “The Great Marsh.”

Running east from downtown, East Jefferson Avenue skirted the shoreline, except in this area, where it bent inland to avoid the marsh.

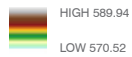
Two creeks bisecting the marsh, Conner and Fox Creeks, were progressively dredged, straightened, and enclosed as canals in the late nineteenth century. They criss-cross the neighborhood, creating a unique character within the city.

## TOPOGRAPHY

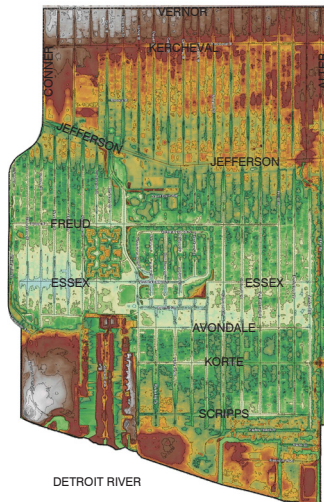
### LEGEND

- CONTOURS (2-FT)
- STREETS
- ▭ PROJECT AREA

### ELEVATION (FT)



DATA SOURCE: CITY OF DETROIT, USFWS, USGS, ESRI



DETROIT RIVER

The topography of Jefferson Chalmers is shaped like a “bowl.” The banks of the Detroit River are elevated, a result of natural levee formation. The lowest elevations run along Essex Ave and Avondale Street. Jefferson Ave is about the same elevation as the riverbank.

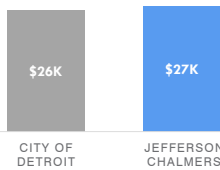
In addition, Jefferson Chalmers is at the bottom of a watershed, which means the neighborhood’s combined sewer system receives water flows from outside and upstream of the neighborhood.

Both of these factors leave this area prone to localized flooding and backups during large storm events.

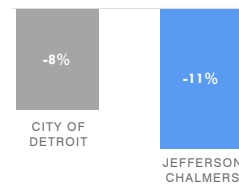
The sewer issues are being addressed by the Detroit Water and Sewer Department [DWSD] and the Great Lakes Water Authority [GLWA] with ongoing planning and capital improvements.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

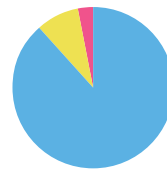
### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2016



### POPULATION DECLINE, 2010-2016



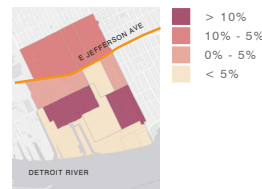
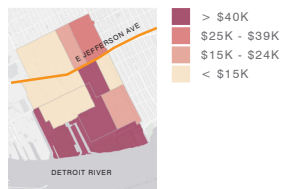
### RACE AND ETHNICITY



- 88.6% AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 8.5% WHITE
- 2.9% OTHER RACES
- 0.24% PEOPLE OF HISPANIC/LATINX DESCENT WITHIN ANY RACE

7,881 people live in Jefferson Chalmers.

Population loss and income levels are largely similar to the city as a whole. However, these indicators vary across the neighborhood, with stable and high-income areas along the waterfront and commercial core.



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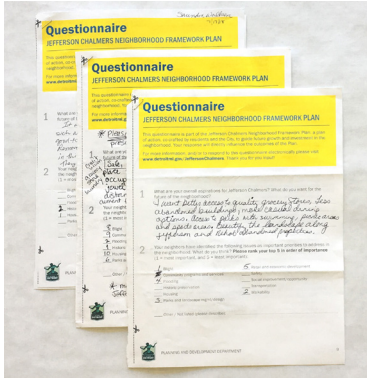
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# WHAT WE HEARD

## STEP 1: THE COMMUNITY'S TOP ASPIRATIONS FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD:

The top 5 aspirations we gathered from the questionnaire responses were:



1. Vibrant Business District
2. Parks and Recreation Improvements
3. Increased Safety
4. Stable Residential Areas
5. Blight Removal

352 questionnaire responses received

## STEP 2: INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The city developed initial recommendations that responded to the community's top aspirations, and residents provided feedback on a scorecard, which ranked the recommendations based on priority:



- Support neighborhood-serving retail on Jefferson
- Build a mixed-use development at Jefferson & Piper
- Rehab DLBA-owned vacant houses
- Stabilize high-vacancy areas
- Improve Streetscapes
- Repurpose former Guyton School
- Improve public access to the riverfront
- Reuse vacant lots: expand existing farms and gardens
- Improve pedestrian connections
- Reuse vacant lots: plant rain gardens
- Reuse vacant lots: solar pilot projects
- Establish a Conservation Overlay District
- Reuse vacant lots: forest grove
- Improve public access to the canals



162 scorecards received

## STEP 3: FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the community's responses, and through collaboration and coordination with other city departments and agencies, the final recommendations were developed.

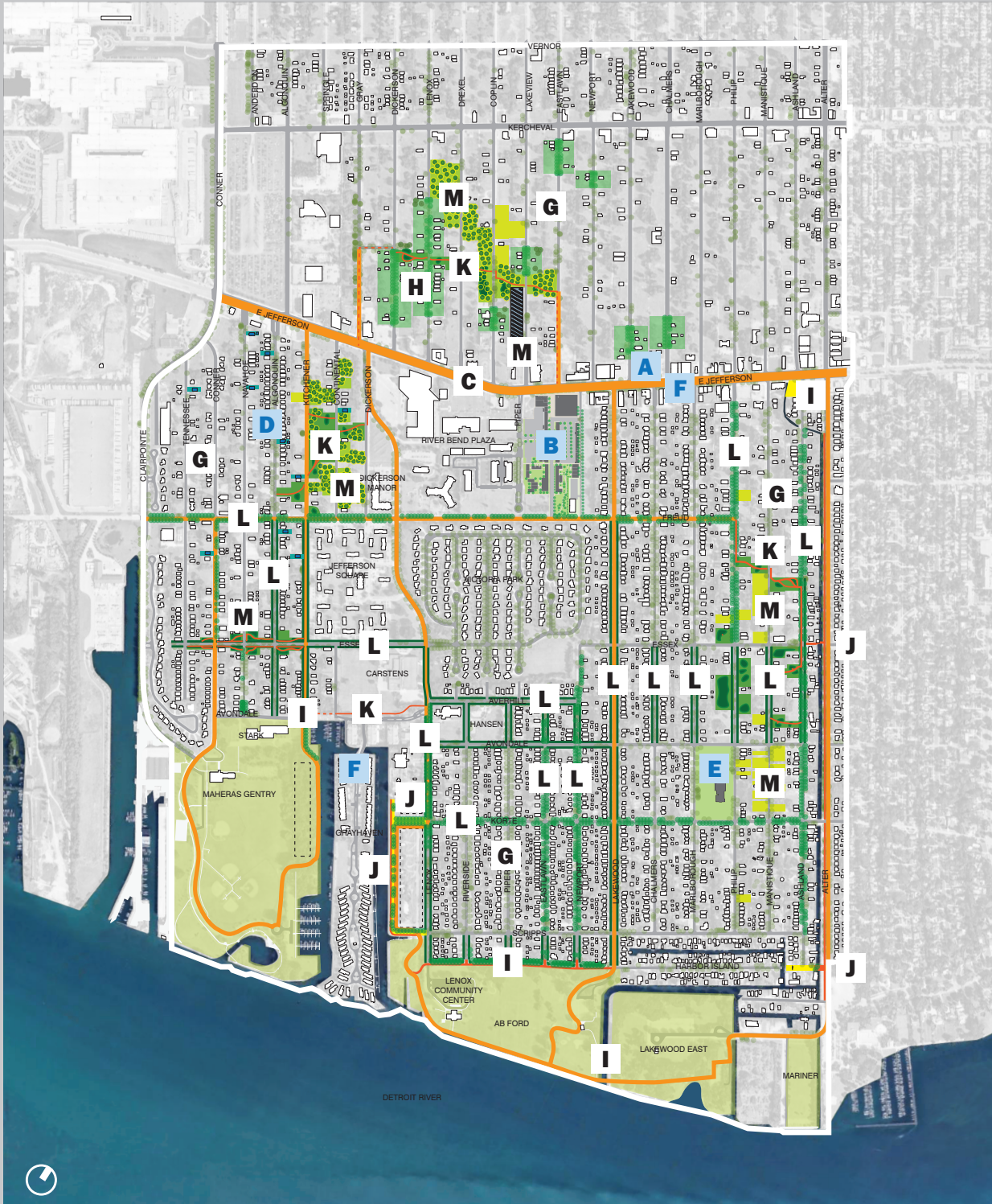
**SEE BOARDS 4 THROUGH 10**



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# SUMMARY OF FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS



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PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT





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# SUMMARY OF FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1

## REJUVENATE RETAIL ON E JEFFERSON AVE.



**A** SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD-SERVING RETAIL ON JEFFERSON



**B** BUILD A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AT JEFFERSON AND PIPER



**C** ENHANCE JEFFERSON STREETScape

2

## STABILIZE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING



**D** REHAB LAND BANK-OWNED VACANT HOUSES



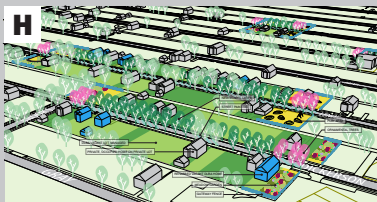
**E** RE-PURPOSE GUYTON AS COMMUNITY SPACE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING



**F** PRESERVE AND DEVELOP AFFORDABLE HOUSING



**G** ESTABLISH A CONSERVATION OVERLAY DISTRICT



**H** STABILIZE HIGH-VACANCY AREAS NORTH OF JEFFERSON

3

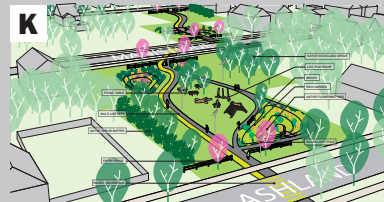
## IMPROVE WALKABILITY + SUSTAINABILITY



**I** IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE RIVERFRONT



**J** IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE CANALS



**K** IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS



**L** IMPROVE STREETScapeS



**M** REUSE VACANT LOTS

### LEGEND

- LONG TERM FRAMEWORK
  - SHORT TERM ACTION PROJECTS
- The Short Term Action Projects will be implemented in the next 3-5 years.
- These projects are covered in more detail in the following boards (Boards 6-10).

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# A FINAL RECOMMENDATION: SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD-SERVING RETAIL ON JEFFERSON



EXISTING AND PROPOSED OF THE VANITY BALLROOM - SOURCE: JEFFERSON EAST INC. (JEI)

- Partner with Jefferson East, Inc. to renovate the Vanity Ballroom
- Neighborhood-based retail on the ground floor
- Public use on second floor
- Prioritize local hiring



**NORMA G'S**

- Motor City Match recipient
- First sit-down restaurant in 30 years
- Local, black-owned business
- Local hiring commitments
- Affordable menu pricing



**KRESGE BUILDING**

- New asian/mexican restaurant
- Offices for non-profit

**Feedback From Prioritization Survey:**

**“I hear from people older than me how vibrant the Jefferson corridor, especially the Vanity Ballroom, was in the 1930’s. A return to a thriving Jefferson Chalmers would be wonderful. Just don’t push out the residents - some of whom are families who have been here for generations!”**

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# B FINAL RECOMMENDATION: BUILD A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AT JEFFERSON AND PIPER



EXISTING AND PROPOSED OF DEVELOPMENT AT JEFFERSON AND PIPER

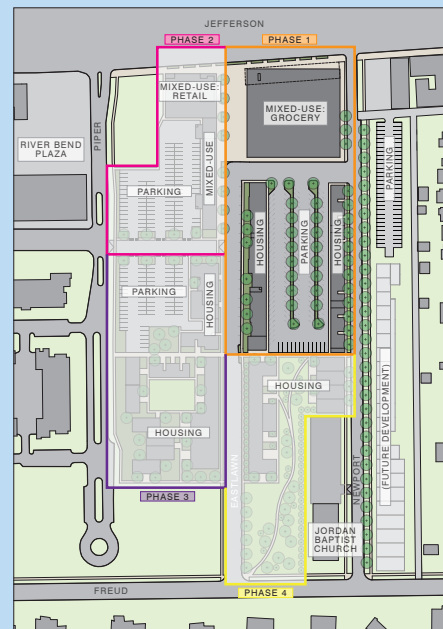
Partner with a developer to build:

- Full-service grocery store
- Retail space for neighborhood-serving shops and restaurants
- Affordable apartments reserved for low-income households

**Feedback From Prioritization Survey:**

**“Excellent idea - just make sure the grocery store is affordable and suitable for the neighborhood!”**

**“I feel like we should have a grocery store over here instead of going somewhere 20 or 30 minutes out to get some food.”**



CONCEPTUAL PLAN OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

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# D FINAL RECOMMENDATION: REHAB LAND BANK-OWNED VACANT HOUSES



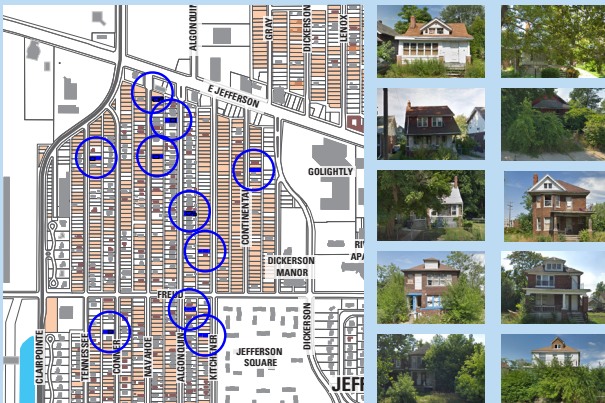
3445 FISCHER BEFORE AND AFTER REHABILITATION

- Partner with a developer to renovate approximately 10 vacant houses and duplexes
- Reserve renovated houses for low-income buyers and sell them at affordable prices

Feedback From Prioritization Survey:

**“Rehabbing homes is important... Not only does it provide housing that will attract homeowners or long term tenants, it improves the quality of living for current residents.”**

**“Vacant buildings bring down the property value of the entire street... All of these buildings need to be repaired.”**



VACANT HOUSES PROPOSED FOR RENOVATION

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# FINAL RECOMMENDATION:

## RE-PURPOSE FORMER GUYTON SCHOOL AS COMMUNITY SPACE + AFFORDABLE HOUSING



### CHALLENGES TO REOPENING GUYTON AS A SCHOOL:

- Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) faces \$500 million in deferred maintenance to its existing facilities
- There is already an operating DPSCD school in the neighborhood (Carstens Elementary/Middle at Remus Robinson)
- The deteriorating condition of the Guyton building necessitates urgent action to save the building before it deteriorates to a condition beyond repair



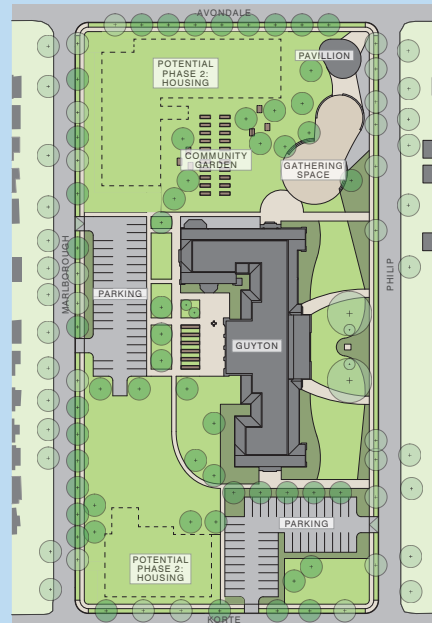
### EXISTING AND PROPOSED OF GUYTON REUSE

- Partner with developer to restore and redevelop the Guyton Building
- Convert ground floor spaces for community use
- Convert classrooms into affordable apartments reserved for low-income households

### Feedback From Prioritization Survey:

**“If this is not going to be a school, we should think of the best multi-use space for everyone.”**

**“It is a huge emotional eyesore, new life would be great.”**



PLAN OF PROPOSED REUSE

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# F FINAL RECOMMENDATION: PRESERVE AND DEVELOP AFFORDABLE HOUSING



AFFORDABLE UNITS AT IDAO BUILDING (CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION)



GRAYHAVEN VILLAGE



MARLBOROUGH BUILDING

- Partner with private owner of Grayhaven Village to preserve the affordability of 39 apartments for another 30 years
- Partner with Jefferson East, Inc. and Shelbourne Development to restore the vacant Marlborough and IDAO Buildings into 23 units of mixed-income housing



MAP OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN JEFFERSON CHALMERS

PROPERTY	UNITS
1 GRAYHAVEN	39
2 IDAO BUILDING	4
3 MARLBOROUGH BUILDING	8
4 REHAB BUNDLE	16
5 GUYTON APARTMENTS	20-40
6 JEFFERSON & PIPER	34-68
7 LAKEWOOD MANOR	30
8 PHILLIP SIMS	121
9 GRAY STREET PHASE 1	10
10 CREEKSIDE HOMES	45
11 JEFFERSON SQUARE	180
12 JEFFERSON MEADOWS	83
<b>590 + AFFORDABLE UNITS</b>	

Feedback From Community Meeting #3:

**“We want development without displacement.”**

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# FEEDBACK

## QUESTION + ANSWER

Below are transcribed comments taken from a video recording of the meeting.

**Question:**

I'm a longtime resident in Jefferson Chalmers. **Working very hard with our community group to come up with priorities that we deemed important – is not really on our list.** You said \$500 million is what we are in a deficit for our schools and that's why the school is not going to be opened. When the emergency manager came in, I don't know how many remembered, we voted not to have Emergency Managers and they came anyway. Our governor decided to use a new law. They closed Guyton, and Guyton was a viable school. We had a number of students that were there. They closed it, they left it closed. They allowed it to be in the shape that it is in.

If you are coming to a community, the first thing they look for is a school for their children. Now, we do have 1 school, Chrysler School that is a K-5. **We are still going to fight for a K-5 school in Jefferson Chalmers.**

The other thing we are looking at is affordable housing. **I ask the question: If Grayhaven is going to allow 39 affordable housing for someone to come in – what program is it going to be? Is it Section 8, because they are not allowing anyone in for 5 years.** I need to know, because I have people that are looking for affordable housing. I asked Josh but he couldn't tell me. Please do me a favor, when you get that information can you let me know?

**And yes, recreation was the other thing – high priority. People keep turning down the fact that we don't need recreation centers in in our community.** As children, years ago if you could just close your eyes for a minute and think back when you were a kid. **The**



RESIDENTS ASK QUESTIONS AT THE Q&A SESSION WHICH FOLLOWED THE PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS | COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVOCATES OF DETROIT



**neighborhood you lived in had a community center. We had two! Now we're going to get a community center whether we get it through this program or another, we're going to keep fighting for it.** We're going to keep asking for a school. You can tell us our schools are closed. Our money, our tax money paid for Guyton. That came from Detroit citizens. It was closed by emergency managers, and then when it was closed long enough, they deemed that it cannot be repaired – oh boy! Guess what? “We can't do anything for you”. Yes, you can, there is a lot that can be done. Thank you!

**Answer:**

**Josh Bails / City of Detroit Housing and Revitalization**

**Department (HRD):** I can respond to some of the affordability questions there. **With Grayhaven, that is 39 existing affordable units that people are inhabiting and what we are doing is preserving the affordability so that those people can continue to stay there. Those people are Section 8. We are helping to get Project-based vouchers from the housing commission to be able to keep the residents that are there, to stay there.** To preserve the affordability on there. **A lot of what we are talking about with new affordability coming up, would not necessarily be section 8 or have to go through the section 8 program. Such as the Marlborough apartments currently under construction, it would just have to be an income verification that people are under a certain income – the AMI we were talking about. So I believe there, it is anyone making under 60% AMI.** You don't need to be in Section 8 to qualify for affordable units like that we are bringing into the market. When it comes to Grayhaven, that is not new spaces we are making available to anyone. That is us trying to make sure that the residents that are there currently can stay there.

**Meagan Elliott / Chief Parks Planner, City of Detroit General Services Department (GSD):** In regards to the Recreation Centers.

**We have been meeting with many of you alongside this process. We've heard loud and clear your need for recreation. As part of this process, we talked a lot about how it would be impossible for us to reopen Maheras Gentry as a recreation center, because of the cost of doing that for such a large building.** And really the operations and maintenance costs long-term of doing that, we're just not financially in the place where we can do that as a city. **But we do know that you need indoor recreation space so we've been trying to figure out a way to do that. So that is why we've been focusing on Lenox center. As you know it's a smaller building footprint.** But I know, (off camera comment), I agree. **And it's a community center, not really a recreation space. So what we've been able to do is actually take that initial budget and add dollars so that we can add a gym space, or some sort of indoor recreation space onto the building footprint. So we'll have a community center with a larger recreational space – would be added to the footprint of the building – the Lenox building.** So what we've been working really hard on is a revenue model for the Lenox Center so that we can sometimes do revenue generation through things like special events there. So that all that money



MAURICE COX, PLANNING DIRECTOR, ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE | COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVOCATES OF DETROIT

returns back into the center and then we can use it for programming and operations of that additional portion. So, we are very excited to move forward with that. As part of the wrapping up of the planning framework we're now kicking off those meetings to make sure that we hear from everyone exactly what they want to see in that building footprint. Also, you might remember Maria Galarza. She works as park planner now in GSD and you'll be seeing a whole lot more of her as she'll be leading that engagement session for the Lenox Center and AB Ford park.

**Josh Bails / HRD:** In response to the question about Guyton. Many of you may remember from our last community meeting, Alysia Merriweather from DPSCD (Detroit Public Schools Community District) came to talk about of the issues we discussed in our presentation here. (of camera comment). **What we've heard**



from the school district is that they are not planning to open a school here in the foreseeable future. If they come up with a plan with you, we are always open to that conversation. It's just that, as of the information that we have now, there is not any plans through DPSCD that could reopen the school. And we do not support a charter school, we don't want to bring anymore charter schools into the city. **So our main focus: we want to make sure that building stays in the neighborhood and that we don't lose it to demolition because it's too far gone. That's why we're looking at housing as the main use of the building. As Allen stated in the presentation, we want to keep the building as a community asset as well, by having some spaces on the main floor stay open to the community. We are looking at the gym and the auditorium, possibly some more classrooms that could potentially be reserved for people to have community classes, meetings, performances, things like that is ideally how we want to see that building redeveloped.** So, that's what we are looking at with the school building. **Our main priority is we want to make sure we are able to keep that building. That we are able to return it to its historical character and that it continues to be an amenity for the neighborhood.**

**Question:**

I used to be very active in the community, and helped with many of you here, lead the efforts to save Guyton. **Because of the activism of this community we were able to convince DPS to keep it open for several years longer than they wanted to.** So that gives you a little bit of an idea about how productive this group can be when they put their minds to it. I've been out of commission physically. So I was really interested – and I know you focused on the primary recommendations A-F. **But I'm looking at G: "Establish a conservation overlay district" and I'm wondering what that was and improving public access to the canals. If someone could at least go through the rest of the recommendations that are here, and if there are other efforts going on, and whose leading them, if you could just mention what's being done in those areas, it would be really helpful.**

**Answer:**

**Josh Bails / HRD:** A lot of those other recommendations, as Allen was saying, **are ideas that we looked in to through the planning study process but that are not currently slated with the funding we have available to be something that we start in the next 3 – 5 years. That's why we are focusing on what we say are the priority projects. Those are things that we know that we have the resources available to actually start on in the foreseeable future.** But we want to keep track of all these other programs that we discussed. So that when new opportunities come up, so that we can return to these ideas and possibly see them come to fruition.

**Jacky Taylor / City of Detroit Planning and Development Department (PDD):** I'm a historian in the planning department. **The Conservation Overlay District is something that we've been**

**exploring. As many of you know the corridor of E. Jefferson is in a local historic district. Your residential property is not in a district. But we would like to see the properties that you've invested in preserved and secured, your investment secured. So we've looked at concepts such as this overlay, which is a zoning overlay, a historic preservation overlay in some cities.** And how we could use it in Detroit to help protect the character of your neighborhood, the character of your houses. That are a lot of gaps in between these beautiful homes, so how do we prevent inappropriate mansion-ization, or any kind of insensitive development occurring in your residential neighborhood. So it's an exploration of possibilities. We're going to come back out to the community and talk to you further about this. If you are interested in a local historic district, that is a question that can be raised as well. **But it is very much in the exploratory phase, and I'm very much interested in hearing your opinions and we can discuss further.** Thank you.

**Question:**

**My question is what's the plan for the area around Guyton school. The rest of the property outside the building. Are there any plans for that, which will be in your RFP (Request for Proposals)?**

**Answer:**

**Josh Bails / HRD:** **The block that Guyton is essentially one large parcel, so the RFP would be to essentially have a developer take over that whole property and the first phase of it – what we know we want to see happen – would be the redevelopment of the building itself.** As you can see on the board over there, it's also in your packets. One thing we are looking into is, whether or not some of land on that block, because it is a rather large property with a lot of open space on it. **Whether or not it would make sense to possibly do some new construction, additional infill housing on there.** That is something that would be a bit further down the road – we would definitely have more conversations on. **But it would be a matter of what the community would like to see, if there is a better way to reuse that open space that the community would appreciate more. But right now, that is the current focus. That (development of the open space on the Guyton parcel) is something that could happen in the future.**

**Maurice Cox / Director of PDD:** **I did want to address the question about the canals and the upgrading of pedestrian experience,** of which there was a lot of discussion over the course of the year. I for one, was really anticipating a lot of community support for it. **But as you saw, in the ranking that was not where people felt the focus should be with the initial investment. And we intended to respect that.** That does not mean that those weren't great ideas that we would like to see investment brought to. **But they're going to have to be prioritized a little later in the process. So what we will be doing is taking all of the recommendations, things that are ranked highly as first in and things that might take more resources and more study and put it into a framework document that captures all of it. So that when**

**resources become available, we can actually return to something that we already know has been vetted with the community. And that also speaks to the vacant land strategy.** Lots of thoughts about how to steward that land in the interim period: it was not where people thought where the initial investment should be. **As so what you see today, is a reflection of where the majority of residents had said where investments should go. And it was on Jefferson. And I think there is some basic logic to that, because they knew that the improvements to Jefferson will be accessible to the people who live north of Jefferson and to the neighbors who live south of Jefferson. So there was the most benefit to the most people in investing there first.** I hope that in the future, some of the land based recommendations that increase walkability, increase access will be folded into the future recommendations. So what you've seen is what we know the city can deliver that you will see in some real time first. But it is not assuming that the land based recommendations that came forward won't be captured at some later date, they will.

**Question:**

**I wonder if some of these pieces are being covered in the Riverfront Conservancy piece. I understand there are meetings going on in conjunction with the Riverfront Conservancy also with other private trusts that are talking about investing in our parks.** I'm just wondering if there is anything there that ties into this and any meetings coming up on those aspects, I'd like to know.

**Answer:**

**Meagan Elliott / GSD: We have investments in every single park in this neighborhood, which I think is pretty exciting, and not typically the norm.** Some might have remembered **Hansen Park**, the neighborhood playfield up on Avondale. **In 2017 we did a full renovation of that neighborhood park. Mariner, on the far eastside: this summer we have a restroom going in there, solar lighting and a brand new playground.** Also, **Maheras Gentry** on the western edge of the map. **We have lot of stuff going in there this summer as well, including a new playground, picnic area, repairs to the shelter, walking path, benches, and new soccer goals.** So all of that's happening this construction season as soon as the ground thaws. **And we'll also be leading the input and engagement around the Lenox center and AB Ford park in general,** so that next summer we can start construction work on that park. Oh I'm sorry, **Lakewood East: there is a habitat restoration project underway being led by the EPA.** That project, from what I've heard is set to be complete in the fall of next year. You can reach out to our offices to get connections to the folks that are leading that process (Lakewood East). It's being led by the Environmental Protection Agency at the federal level, but City government is heavily involved in that. Can someone speak to the "Friends of" group?

**Juvette Hawkins-Williams, President of Friends of Jefferson Chalmers Riverfront Parks:** We have a community crew. First let

me give you my number because it is a long process, 313-629-8597: No one is taking over the parks, no one is building on the parks. We are going to dispel that myth. We formed in the spring of last year. There's a lot of planning of planning that's going on with the parks, too much to mention right now. We should have a website up in the next two months or so. Question from the audience (inaudible): Conservation, Stewardship, Oversight – Federal and the City. This is a community organization, so if you have any additional questions just give me a call. And, we do have the plans for all the parks, so we can email them to you.

**Question:**

I need to make very clear to the City and the County, **that this FEMA redistricting could have big impacts to our community.** I'm a new resident. I moved into Jefferson Chalmers a year and a half ago. **If my property was deemed to be in a flood plain, I would not have been able to close on my property. So, what I need to make clear is that it is going to prohibit people from buying houses in our neighborhood, number one. And it's going to displace some of our residents that have houses with mortgages. We need the city, the county, and the state to fight hard,** because I've seen nobody come through my neighborhood and survey it, and say that I'm in a flood plain more than I was in the last surveying. Secondly, we haven't seen water levels increase since the high waters of the mid '80s. So we need to make sure that Federal government is not allowed to come in and place this tax on us, because it will not improve our neighborhood.

**Answer:**

**Maurice Cox / PDD: We couldn't agree more. The reality is, the city is going to fight this, pretty vigorously. We've organized to do it.** These flood maps are contiguous; they don't just stop at the border. Our neighbors in Grosse Pointe have effectively fought it. **We have a road map to succeed.** We're planning for significant public investment in this area. We would not be doing it with the threat of this. We have to let the process lay itself out, **but you can be sure: you have a very strong advocate on this.** We can't predict the future. The representative was very measured, but I can assure you that everyone from the Mayor to our representatives are on top of this. We need your voice to be heard in the public process because that is the official way to register it. Yes, we're on this one.

**Paul Max/ City of Detroit Buildings, Safety, Engineering, and Environmental Department (BSEED):** I'd just like to emphasize too, how important it is for everyone to show up at the public meeting on February 27th from 5 – 7pm at Wayne County Community College Downtown.

**Josh Bails / HRD:** To clarify, It's a county wide meeting. There are many areas in the city that are being affected as well is in the county. So this meeting being led by FEMA is for the whole county and that is why it is being held where it is, downtown.

**Question:**

**Who owns Guyton, or is there a group of people that owns Guyton?**

**Answer:**

**Josh Bails / HRD: Guyton is currently owned by the City of Detroit.** The City is the owner of the Guyton school. What we're talking about is **with this RFP, it would be to have a private developer redevelop it, with the help of the City to see that affordable housing could be part of that housing that happens in there.** We want to have a discussion with the community about whether you want that to be all affordable housing, or whether you want it to be a mix of some sort. **As we start that RFP process, most likely sometime this summer, there is going to be a lot more community engagement around this.** As Allen said, this is kind of a pivot from the planning phase to the implementation phase and so we're not going away. **You're actually going to be seeing a lot more of me in particularly as we get into these projects.** These are conversations that are going to be ongoing as to what the actually ends up happening here.

**Maurice Cox / PDD: Just to put a larger context** on the school repurposing. **In the plan we did on Grand River - Northwest. The Holcomb School, was the point of conversation there. We were successfully able to get a developer to come in and do affordable senior housing and to preserve some of the community rooms for arts based organizations. This is the wave of the future. We have 70 vacant schools throughout school. And most of them will not be schools again. The only way to save them, is to find other uses, that will graft some other public purpose.** Whether it be community center or an arts organization. **But it's going to be anchored by housing, and hopefully housing where people can age in place and have options in their neighborhood.** For the first time, the city is taking on a comprehensive study of those 70 schools. We can't do them one at a time when we do a neighborhood framework plan. DPSCD has agreed to do that study jointly, so there will be a team that will look at all 70 schools. So, we will not be doing this one neighborhood at a time. I think we're going to find some additional answers to what's viable and what's not. Since I've been here, and it's coming on 4 years, there have been 3 schools that have been identified. **At this rate, we will lose most of those schools if we do not find viable alternative uses for them. And that is what is being proposed here at Guyton, I think it's a win. Otherwise we're going to lose that school.** We're trying to determine which ones are too far gone already. We don't think Guyton is too far gone for repurpose. The idea coming in to this planning study, was to find a way, anyway possible to preserve that building as an asset. I think we have a strategy to do that.

**Question:**

Two quick questions: What time is the FEMA meeting? Also, **could somebody speak on Letter H, Stabilization of the high vacancy**

**areas north of Jefferson****Answer:**

**Paul Max / BSEED:** The FEMA meeting is going to be an open house from 5 – 7pm on the 27th at WCCD Downtown Campus on Fort St.

**Alexa Bush / PDD: In terms of the high vacancy area we got a lot of really great ideas and input from a lot of meetings we had with you all. Including some of the focus groups we did with people who are growers, who are doing other projects in the community with vacant land.** We're still really interested in continuing those conversations. Starting to flesh out what some projects might be, is there a first project we might be able to do. **However, unlike some of the other recommendations that we know we have immediate resources that we've already identified to be able to support: I think we need a little bit more time to figure out exactly what some of that vacant lot reactivation looks like.** Between some of those productive uses, between creating some more walkable connections – knowing how long some of those blocks are north of Jefferson. Those are all pieces in the works.

**There is another effort also taking place city-wide, led out of our department. Looking at public land, land disposition, and alternative uses for some of these vacant lots.** Erin Kelly on our team is running that initiative. She might still be out front, she did hand out a survey as part of the materials on the front table. **So if you've picked up one of those surveys – that's another way to help us move that process forward. If you've got ideas, we'd love to be able to continue the conversation. We just weren't ready at this point to say "here is exactly the first project".** Since we want to do a little more due diligence and also be able to understand how we might be able to fund and support something like that. So again, the projects we focused on today are the ones that we know we'll be able to deliver. We've got a lot of other great ideas that we still want to hold on to and continue to figure out. **As we come up with new resources, as new opportunities present themselves we've got a really great list to go to in order continue to move those forward.**

**Josh Bails / HRD:** Be sure to visit the website, sign up for the mailing list to stay in touch and know when future conversations are happening.

**Question:**

Question for Alexa, and the Conservation Overlay District. **I know that historical districts sometimes have a lot of restrictions on how you can renovate your home or the use of the land as you actually mentioned. I was wondering if that is what you had planned or something different. If that was going to have an effect on the alternative use of the vacant land and/or the way that people are able or not able to renovate their homes.**

**Answer:**

**Jacky Taylor/PDD:** I can't speak to the land use, Alexa will. **As far as the homes go, it's not about regulation. It's getting a little bit away from the strict regulation of the historic districts. Thinking more about the form of the building, the setback from the street, how that might impact the character of the neighborhood.** It's not going to be: "you can't change your window to this other kind of window, you can't change your door", it's not going to be that strict kind of regulations. It's more about the character in general of the neighborhood.

**Question:**

*Inaudible*

**Answer:**

**It would be some kind of regulation that will protect the investment of those who own property in the neighborhood. Yes, but the community would be helping us to define those guidelines. It's not something that we've planned, it's something we're exploring.**

**Question:**

As a long-term resident of Jeff Chalmers. And understanding that the City has dedicated itself to serving those folks that we hope will come here. Understanding that the proof is in the process and in what we're seeing. I've been a part of this as have many of the folks that are in this room. **And I just simply have to say, I am not good at going around in circles. I feel like this whole process has taken us right back to where we began. I believe, I could be wrong, that the plans were already made. The windows were already set. And all we had to do, was to select the proper windows. I feel like we are not being heard, I want to go on record: If the community was being heard, it would not be this kind of aura in the room. Meaning, that everybody is sitting, and listening. But we're not engaged. The fact is, that we have vital, critical, amenities Mr. Cox. That make a community viable, and make a community a "20 minute" community. How about 20 minutes to get an education? How about 20 minutes, to go somewhere so that your children learn how to not die in the river, but they learn how to swim?** We have some foregoing leaders with vision and insight that designed Jefferson Chalmers. **This plan does not enhance that process. I am sorry to say, I know that you are all professionals led by our elected officials. But I would invite the community to continue the process.** Because we live here. After everybody is gone, to the next city, many of us will still be here. We must dedicate, we must leave an inheritance to our children. Many of our children live in this neighborhood called Jeff Chalmers. So I'm inviting the community to come out to our library, Montieth Library. Located on Kercheval that is open 2 days a week. How many of you know about our library and the schedule? On Tuesday at 1pm we are holding a major community meeting. And it will be community. And there will be discussion. And there will

be plans. So thanks you so much. Josh, I know you are excellent as our so many of our city officials. But the community has a real stake in this matter. And the last thing I want to ask, as a tax payer always paying money out to the city. I would like a forensic audit. I would like to know how much was spent on this process. Thank you so much.

**Answer:**

**Josh Bails / HRD: We agree completely that community engagement is something that needs to continue to happen throughout this process.** When it comes to what was spent here that. That was a publicly procured contract – that is all public information. We believe that what we're presenting today, is what is currently possible with the resources we have. That goes in line with the feedback that we've gotten. **We agree that while there many more issues to be addressed in the community, that is something we are going to have to continue to work on. What you are seeing here is a matter of what is currently feasible with what we have to work on.**

**Allen Penniman / PDD:** I wanted to thank you for your comments. **We've been working with you and several others on the Residents in Action committee all year. And we welcome all comments. Folks don't always agree, and that's fine. We've received over 500 questionnaires and scorecards over the past year.** I've transcribed every one, word for word myself. There is a lot of good input there, and invite anyone to sit down with me and go through them, I very much welcome that. Speaking of Montieth, we did mention during the presentation that we had held office hours there, every week. So we could potentially do that again. We understand that Montieth is a community asset that's not open as often as we'd like it to. We definitely understand that as well. **I just want to invite anyone to speak to me to get more detail on how community input was received, documented, and how it translates into what you see today. All opinions are welcome.** Thanks!

**Question:**

With a lot of these projects going to RFP processes, and a lot of City Council approvals for some of the developments coming online. **With the Residents in Action Committee, will there be any continuance of support for residents to organize and be involved. Whether it's at City Council or giving input for some of these development as they either go through the RFP process, or into the approval process at City Council?**

**Answer:**

**Maurice Cox / PDD: Yes. The planning takes hundreds and hundreds of hours of citizen time. Folks in this room are the ones who gave that time and have shaped these recommendations. Implementation, takes a lot more. People may have varying interests as to what particular part of this, they want to drill down and stay informed about – we invite that.** We're going to continue

to communicate out every step every 30 days, with these monthly newsletters. But, **for development. Sometimes, things kind of go quiet once the announcement has been made.** And then months and months pass by, you don't know what's going on because the complexity of trying to put together financing, trying to find the right developer with the right sensibility. Normally, you whittle it down to 1 or 2 or 3 who are viable. **I can assure you that before any developer is chosen, we will come back and have a public meeting. Where they can share with you what their vision, or their interpretation is, of the recommendation.** Then we can take that into account. We did that for the Holcomb school. We did that for Fitzgerald neighborhood: before we chose the developer for that project we held open pitch night, where three of the finalists came. 200 people came out to voice their opinion about what was the right developer to do that project. **I anticipate a similar process, whether it be for the new mixed use grocery store, or for the Guyton school. So yes, we can commit to vetting those proposals with the community in an open forum so that you get to see what kinds of choices are being put forth.**

**Josh Bails / HRD:** I can speak more to that as I'm going to be in charge of a lot of these RFPs myself. As Maurice was saying, we're definitely going to bring this to the public, **but a big part of that process is the actual selection committee that takes a look at all the proposals and everything that we get, and helps us come to the final recommendation that we make is made up of a mix of city officials and residents.** I'm actually currently working on one in the Islandview neighborhood with Toyia Watts is here, and she is actually part of my selection committee on an RFQ to see 8 duplexes in that neighborhood rehabbed. We are working on choosing a developer that residents think would be best for that neighborhood. I know we need to talk about that soon, I'll get back to you on that Toyia. **We're going to do a similar process on all of these RFQs (Requests for Qualifications) and Requests for Proposals as well. Usually the selection committee is around 8-12 people, and we try to keep it about half city officials – people from Housing, Planning, the Land Bank if it's their land, and community residents as well. Once they've taken a look at the proposals and we get to a short list of feasible ones, that's when we'd come to the community. Have a larger engagement process to show: here's the three or four viable plans that we got and get feedback from the community. Once a selection is made, there is going to be through what can be a lengthy predevelopment process, to go from idea to construction. There is going to be a lot more engagement with the community to update on how the plan's going and get feedback on what can be fine-tuned to make sure it reflects what the community wants to see.** That would be the updates through the email, like we were talking about.

#### **Question:**

As someone who has been involved in community development for over three decades, I feel a lot of the concern in this area, from this group. We tried to open a dialogue in this community and get the community voices heard even back in the 1990s **we were able to revisit the Jefferson Chalmers Modified Development Plan.**

**And remediate the coming gentrification, and that was back in the 1990s.** We were able to rezone all the parks as Parks, and get rid of the Planned Development designation. We worked with the Citizens District Council, the Jefferson East, and Creekside. **When we first started, we had three recreation centers on the river. One of them dedicated to children, one of the dedicated to cognitively impaired, handicapped individuals, one dedicated to the senior citizens. Now we have two abandoned buildings that welcome our international guests on the Detroit River. We had three Detroit Public Schools and a vocational center, now we have 2 boarded up schools.** The process is just, disgusting – it really is.

One of the things we worked with as Creekside it to build homes that were lead free, energy efficient and affordable. **One of my questions is, where is Creekside homes now?** I drive by them and I'm saddened. **Because this is something I was very much involved in getting online, along with home repair to fix the leaky roofs and to get rid of the lead, asbestos, and other dangerous chemicals so our children could not be at a deficit in learning and everything else: health, asthma. So what are we going to do?** I know I have lead pipes going into my home, I know that because my water was shut off. When they tried to turn it back on, they found they had to replace the valve. They took care of the lead from the service line in the street to my shut off, and they left the lead going to my house. **And we know we have lead pipes and lead solder, and we know we have asbestos, we know we have all kinds of dangerous chemicals in our houses. What are we going to do about this?** Now I understand we have bus lines that are leaving the neighborhood, **when we started off we had 4 bus lines – we know that many of our residents don't have transportation.** I'm not hearing answers to a lot of these questions. One of my specific questions is: **Where are we with Creekside homes and Habitat Homes that were built back in the mid-90s to 2005? What does this new plan have to protect the people that live here and not just make way for new individuals.**

#### **Answer:**

**Josh Bails / HRD:** Thank you very much for your comments and questions. When it comes to the resources that are available on some these issues such as abatement and home repair for current residents: I actually want to turn this over to Michelle Lee from JEI who actually leads a lot of these efforts for your neighborhood and give you some information on this.

**Michelle Lee / Jefferson East, Inc. (JEI):** I'll be very quick. Even though homes repair is major issue that we are looking at, how to build out substantially greater tools than just the 0% (loans). I want to go back very quickly to Ms. Ashleigh's question about how the RIA activities that took place and committees that participated in that, how they're going to push forward. So we've heard from the city side, **from the community side: we are working as those members, with CDAD and their community engagement director to push out some very specific issues. Josh addressed one part of it, making sure that residents are involved in the selection committees around these RFPs and RFQs. I think there are**

**some additional steps that we need to take from the community aspect, to be able to push up that positive presence.** For us to be at those tables and helping them to frame up how some of these old schools, etc. can actually be very functional to us as residents, because I'm a resident as well.

**In terms of JEI and the home repair. We are working with groups who are coming in to do pilots. Home repair dollars are very few, and very hard to come by. People want grants. Grants are coming through some of the other resources:** U SNAP BAC gets a small bit of funding, for NIP(?) and AMP(?) grants. Those grants happened at a specific time of the year and they usually last about 2 months. Prayerfully, the city's working hard on their single family emphasis within HRD and potentially some of those senior home grants and those types of resources will come up very soon. **In between there, we're working with groups to try and provide low-income homes that again, leaky roofs, lead issues.** I know that the city has been afforded that funding, but with the federal issues we don't know how that's going to spell out. We're hoping to be an intake partner for them. Not only within Jeff Chalmers, but also across the 48214 corridor. **So we're very active in that. Our main emphasis is post purchase. New homeownership is great, and we've got lots of great partners for that. But our main emphasis is what can we do with the people who are here, serve them, and allow them to be able to transition, especially our older members, into additional housing in the future.** So we welcome you to contact our division at any point in time that you wish. We can get you to resources if we don't have them. The number for Jefferson East housing is 313-331-7939, press extension 1, and you can ask for myself, Michelle Lee or Rebecca Nikodem, our Housing Intake Coordinator who is here. We'd be happy to get you the services that we can. We work with Wayne Metro and a lot of difference organizations, even if its water shutoffs or whatever we can do. Going back to the issue with Ashleigh, I know you work with U of M Poverty we'd love to have your input through CDAD and that process as well.

**Question:**

**Are you saying the process better than it used to qualify people and get people with the contractor issues and everything that we have dealt with,** to get this money into the houses and affect our families? **Secondly, where is Creekside homes, who owns it?** Is MSHDA still involved in it? Those houses cost \$180,00 apiece and to just let them rot away.

**Answer:**

**Michelle Lee / JEI:** Yes you are correct. They are not going to rot away. To answer the first question, the process has gotten a wee bit, I don't want to say easier. **But there are more groups working together, including HRD, the non-profit housing entities on the eastside: Jefferson East, U SNAP BAC housing. Those entities are working more collaboratively now. So their resources are shared, we know where to direct people to.** You also have CDFIs – Community Development Financing Institutions that are also

stepping into being able to assist individuals in terms of home repair. So, the cry is out that. Not that it's easier but we are going to be able to build some tools that can help people. **Right now we are working with Rebuilding Together in the Jeff Chalmers, just that area for a pilot. But it's based on a sustainable model that will continue for 2-3 years** and we also believe that model will be able to be replicated through our service corridor and in other areas potentially – there has to be funding behind that.

**Creekside homes, now is owned by a developer you are probably familiar with. I won't share that information because it's not mine to share.** Hopefully in the future, what they'll be doing is partnering some people to make those homes more productive than they are right now.

**Question:**

Can you tell me about that emergency money? My roof leaks!

**Answer:**

**Josh Bails / HRD:** Before we move on, I want to address the question about the buses as well. I have a representative from DDOT here.

**Mikey Taylor-Henricks / City of Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT):** I'm the community liaison for DDOT. I do have some schedules with me today and I'm available to talk about service if there are any questions. **We did not remove service from Jeff Chalmers, we changed the routing. We are now serving it with 68 Chalmers, whereas previously we were serving the neighborhood with 13 Conner.** I have schedules, more than willing to talk about service, any concerns, I'm here for a while. Come find me if you want to talk.

**Meagan Elliott / GSD:** Wanted to address something else at it relates to transportation. **I hear the concern about the swimming pools and I just wanted to say something about that. It's been really challenging, I know how a lot of people feel in the neighborhood and especially their emotional connection to Maheras Gentry and what it meant to them.** I know it's really hard to see recreation centers close. We have honestly been doing our absolute best to provide some sort of community asset that residents can point to and say that you did listen to us and you did hear our concerns, **that's why we've pushed so hard to be able to extend that community center (Lenox). Pools in particular are incredibly maintenance intensive both on the heating / cooling side.** In addition to all the others things that are in Maheras Gentry. **But, what we have offered and what we're working on with the programming side of our department is providing a shuttle service. So that residents that live in Jefferson Chalmers can either get to Coleman A. Young Recreation Center or Heilmann and be able to take their kids to swim classes at either of those places. Or the Brennen Pool in Rouge during the summer time, which is our only outdoor pool in the city. We only have 7 indoor and one outdoor. So we're incredibly limited in that, and I**

**recognize it and I see it city wide. Part of what we do every day is try and figure out how we can put more resources into that.** But when it's not possible, how can we work with what we have and get residents to where they need to be. So I hope that helps specifically address the swimming concern, thanks!

**Maurice Cox / PDD:** I think that we are venturing on three hours, that some folks have been here. And we can continue to answer individual questions and linger around the boards. **I don't want to lose sight of what I think is an extraordinary moment, where the city can bring 12 projects, with an absolute commitment to getting them done. That is what we want to be judged by. These are what I think are visionary, but at the same time very, very pragmatic.** You will know whether they were done.

Because over the course of a few months, you will start to see the building being rehabbed, the meetings around public investment in that streetscape. New stores going into those shops. **The improvements that I think show residents who've stuck it out in these neighborhoods that their community is being revived. So, I really don't want to lose the celebratory moment that we're at and that so many of you have helped us shape. So I want to thank you. Thank you for giving us the input, shaping the priorities, and hopefully your continued engagement as we move forward to implementation.** Thank you again! We're going to stay around to answer the questions that you have, but thank you again for your work on this plan and we look forward to executing it with you. Thank you!



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