After School:
Detroit Historic Vacant School Property Study

April 2021

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Project Overview

The *Detroit Vacant Historic School Building Disposition Strategy* is the result of a one year study of vacant schools in Detroit conducted by the City of Detroit in 2020.

The objective of this project was to complete a holistic, comparative study of 63 vacant school properties (VSPs) in Detroit—including 39 owned by the City of Detroit (City) and 24 owned by the Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD)—and to make recommendations regarding their redevelopment potential.

One key goal of this project was to develop a set of citywide metrics and strategies that can be broadly applied to VSPs across the city in order to assess, prioritize, and market them for redevelopment. A second major goal was to identify the opportunities and challenges of preserving, rehabbing, and reusing historic vacant school buildings, and imagine new futures for these special places.

The project scope included:

- **Site visits** to each of the 63 VSPs included in the study, up to 4 hours each, conducted from January to August 2020
- **Detailed building conditions assessments of 39 City-owned VSPs.** Assessments include interior and exterior walkthroughs and detailed assessments of building envelope, structural systems, architectural characteristics, and historic significance.
- **Reconnaissance-level conditions assessments of 24 DPSCD-owned VSPs.** Assessments include interior and exterior walkthroughs, and assessments of building envelope and architectural characteristics.
- **Building conditions summary reports** for all VSPs, including descriptions of the overall condition of the structure, facade, and roof systems, and an overall Building Risk Index (BRI) score that based on the type, severity, and distribution of distress.
- **Order-of-magnitude construction cost estimates** for general building stabilization and rehabilitation (to a greybox state) for all VSPs.
- **Neighborhood analysis** for all VSPs, including mapping surrounding building stock, open space, land use, ownership, and key neighborhood assets.
- **Market analysis** for all VSPs, including demographic trends, economic trends, and key real estate market indicators.
- **Redevelopment recommendations** for all VSPs including for sites that are viable for reuse and for those deemed non-viable.
- **Investment memos** for high-potential City-owned VSPs, including schematic-level reuse scenarios, order-of-magnitude construction costs, and pro forma templates.
- **A website** to serve as a public-facing repository of information

about each of the City-owned VSPs, as well as resources promoting and facilitating the disposition and reuse of these sites. The website serves as a platform for community engagement and as a marketing tool.

The core project team included:

- City of Detroit Planning and Development Department (PDD)
- City of Detroit Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD)
- City of Detroit Department of Neighborhoods (DON)
- Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD)
- Interboro Partners - Lead consultant, architecture and urban design
- Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates (WJE) - structural engineering
- BJH Advisors - Real estate and economic development
- A.M. Higley - Construction cost estimating

Additional support was provided by the following partners:

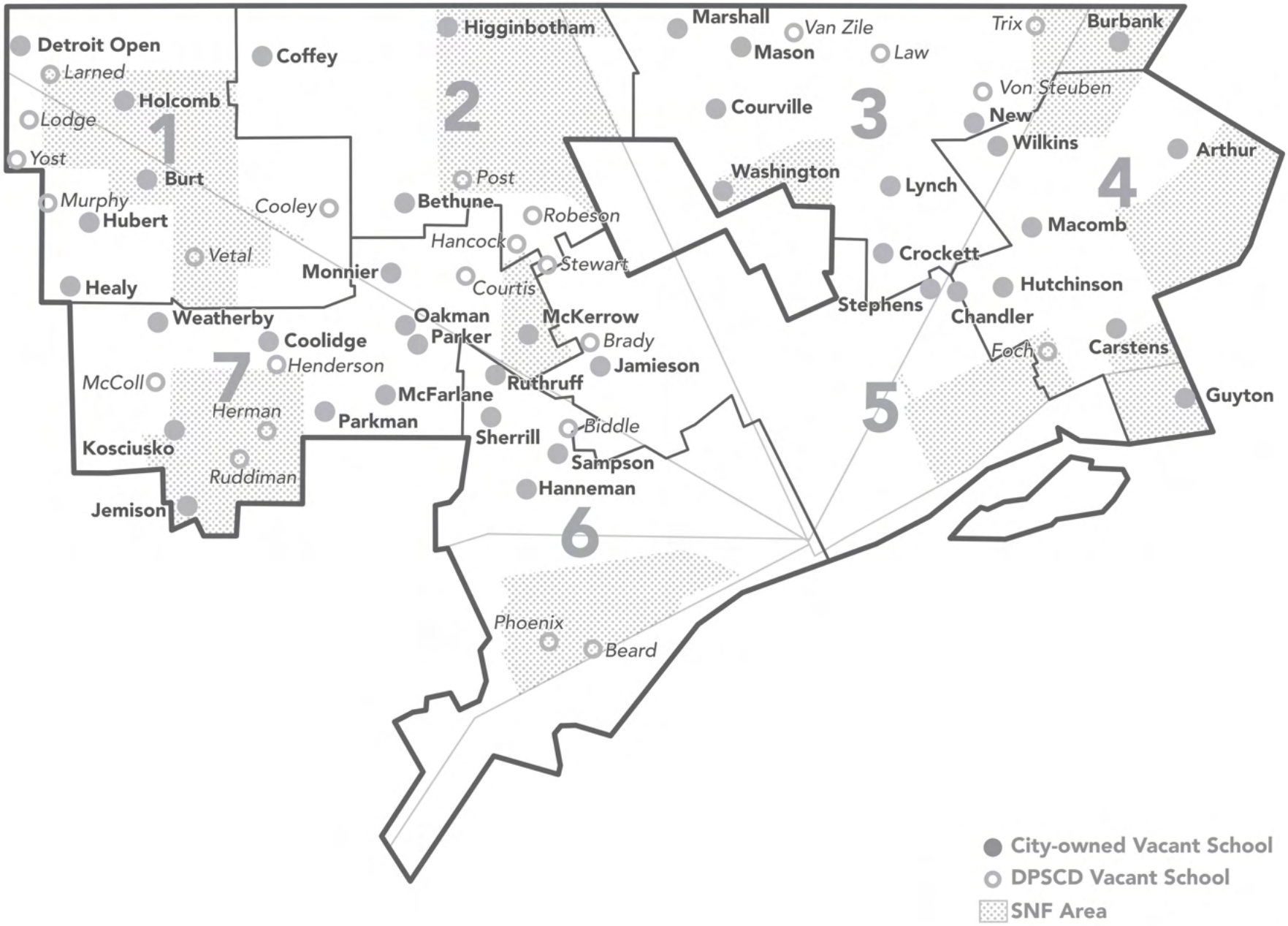
- Detroit Building Authority
- Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board
- Detroit Parks and Recreation
- Detroit Economic Development Corporation
- Granco Security

The following organizations contributed their time and shared insights from their own development experience for this project:

- Curtis Building Company
- Midtown Detroit Inc.
- Q Factor
- Artspace Consulting

Finally, the project team thanks the many caring and concerned Detroiters who came forward to share their memories, ideas, and wishes for the vacant historic schools in their communities. These historic schools served as anchors of your communities for many decades, and we sincerely hope that this project will pave the way toward new uses for these important places that will serve Detroit for decades to come.

Vacant School Properties



City of Detroit-owned Vacant School Properties

District	Name	Address
1	Burt	20710 Pilgrim
1	Detroit Open	24601 Frisbee
1	Healy	12834 West Parkway
1	Holcomb	18100 Bentler
1	Hubert	14825 Lamphere
2	Bethune	10763 Fenkell
2	Coffey	19300 Lindsay
2	Higginbotham	20119 Wisconsin
3	Burbank	15600 E State Fair
3	Courville	18040 St. Aubin
3	Crockett	8950 St. Cyril
3	Lynch	7575 Palmetto
3	Marshall	1255 E State Fair
3	Mason	19635 Mitchell
3	New	17142 Rowe
3	Washington	13000 Dequindre
4	Arthur	10125 King Richard
4	Carstens	2550 Coplin
4	Guyton	355 Philip
4	Hutchinson	5220 French
4	Macomb	12051 Evanston
4	Wilkins	12501 Hamburg
5	Chandler	9227 Chapin
5	Jamieson	2900 W Philadelphia
5	Stephens	5974 Seneca
6	Hanneman	6420 McGraw
6	Ruthruff	6311 W Chicago
6	Sampson	6075 Begole
6	Sherrill	7300 Garden
7	Coolidge	16501 Elmira
7	Jemison	6201 Auburn
7	Kosciusko	20390 Auburn
7	McFarlane	8900 Cheyenne
7	McKerrow	4800 Collingwood
7	Monnier	13600 Ward
7	Oakman	12920 Wadsworth
7	Parker	12744 Elmira
7	Parkman	15000 Mackenzie
7	Weatherby	12099 Fielding

DPSCD-owned Vacant School Properties

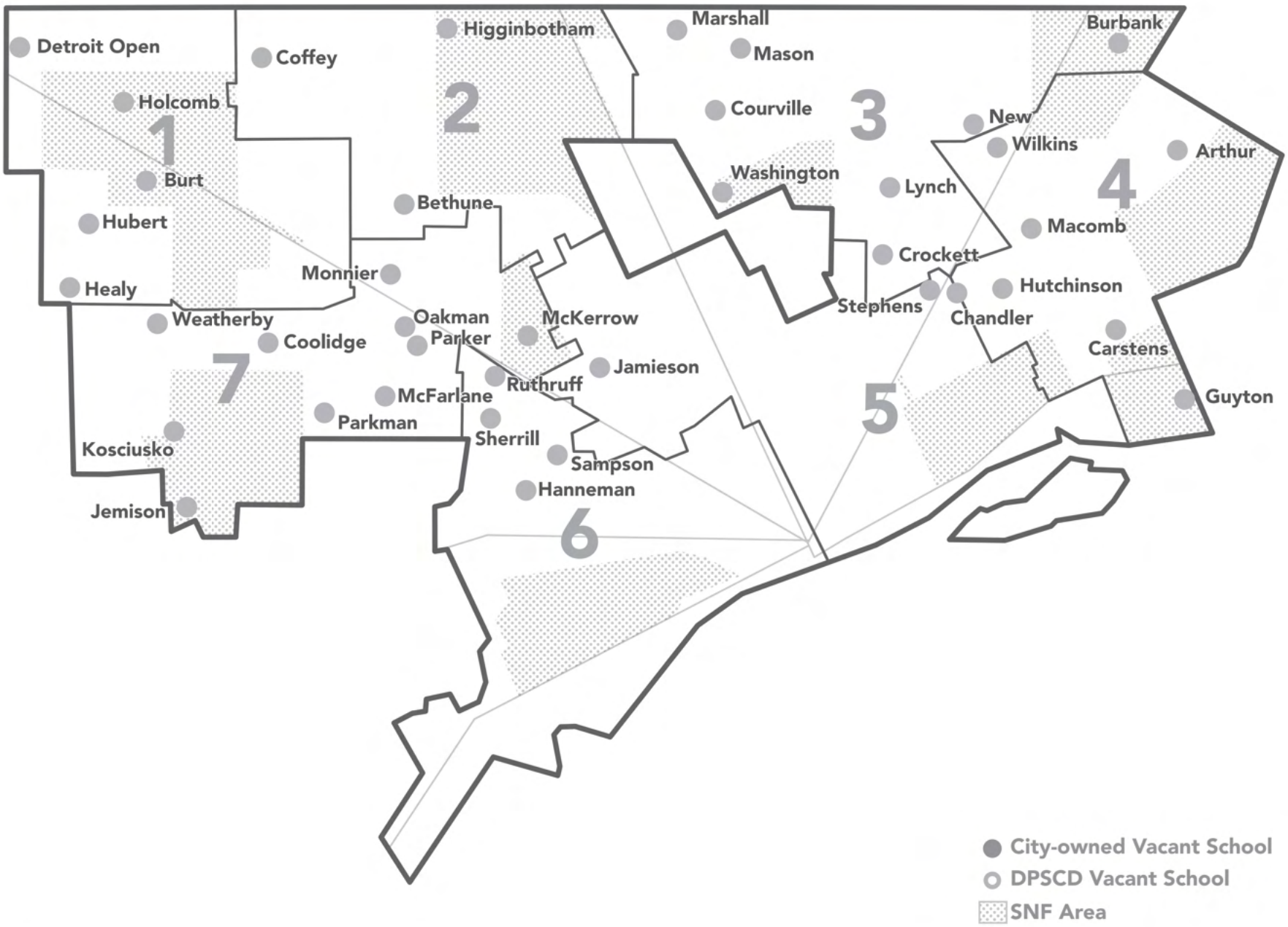
District	Name	Address
1	Cooley	15055 Hubbell
1	Larned	23700 Clarita
1	Lodge	17454 Lenore
1	Murphy	23901 Fenkell
1	Vetal	14200 Westwood
1	Yost	16161 Winston
2	Hancock	2220 Ewald Circle
2	Post	8200 Midland
2	Robeson	14900 Parkside
2	Stewart	13120 Wildemere
3	Law	19490 Carrie
3	Trix	13700 Bringard
3	Van Zile	2915 E Outer Drive
3	Von Steuben	12300 Linnhurst
4	Foch	2962 Fairview
5	Brady	2920 Joy
6	Beard	840 Waterman
6	Biddle	4601 Seebaldt
6	Phoenix	7735 Lane
7	Courtis	8100 W Davison
7	Henderson	9600 Mettetal
7	Herman	16400 Tireman
7	McColl	20550 Cathedral
7	Ruddiman	7350 Southfield

City-Owned Vacant Schools

This study of Detroit's historic vacant school properties was led by the City of Detroit Planning and Development Department, with additional support from Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD). The consulting team conducted assessments of 63 vacant school properties owned by both the City and DPSCD; however, since this was a City-led study, special emphasis was placed on the 39 properties owned by the City.

The following section contains a series of recommendations and priority lists for the 39 City-owned vacant school properties. While the discussion is specifically about the City-owned properties, the general principles may be applied to all historic vacant school properties in Detroit, regardless of ownership.

City-Owned Vacant School Properties



Priority Sites: SNF

Priority #1: Redevelop vacant school sites located in Strategic Neighborhood Fund (SNF) Areas.

SNF areas have already been identified as high-potential neighborhoods, and vacant school redevelopment projects there will benefit from targeted funding resources, clear planning and development priorities, a mobilized community, political will, and positive synergies from other nearby development projects. Vacant school redevelopments will be among the largest and highest-profile projects in the SNF area and can play an important role in catalyzing smaller developments around them.Conversely, vacant schools that are not redeveloped promptly and continue to be large, visible sites of blight may put a damper on other revitalization efforts within the SNF area, especially when located in dense neighborhoods or near key community hubs.

DBA should take immediate steps to waterproof roofs, ensure drainage, and secure SNF schools, starting with schools that are in the best condition.

The City should aggressively seek out development opportunities for the most viable SNF schools, and plan to issue RFPs in the next 1-2 years.

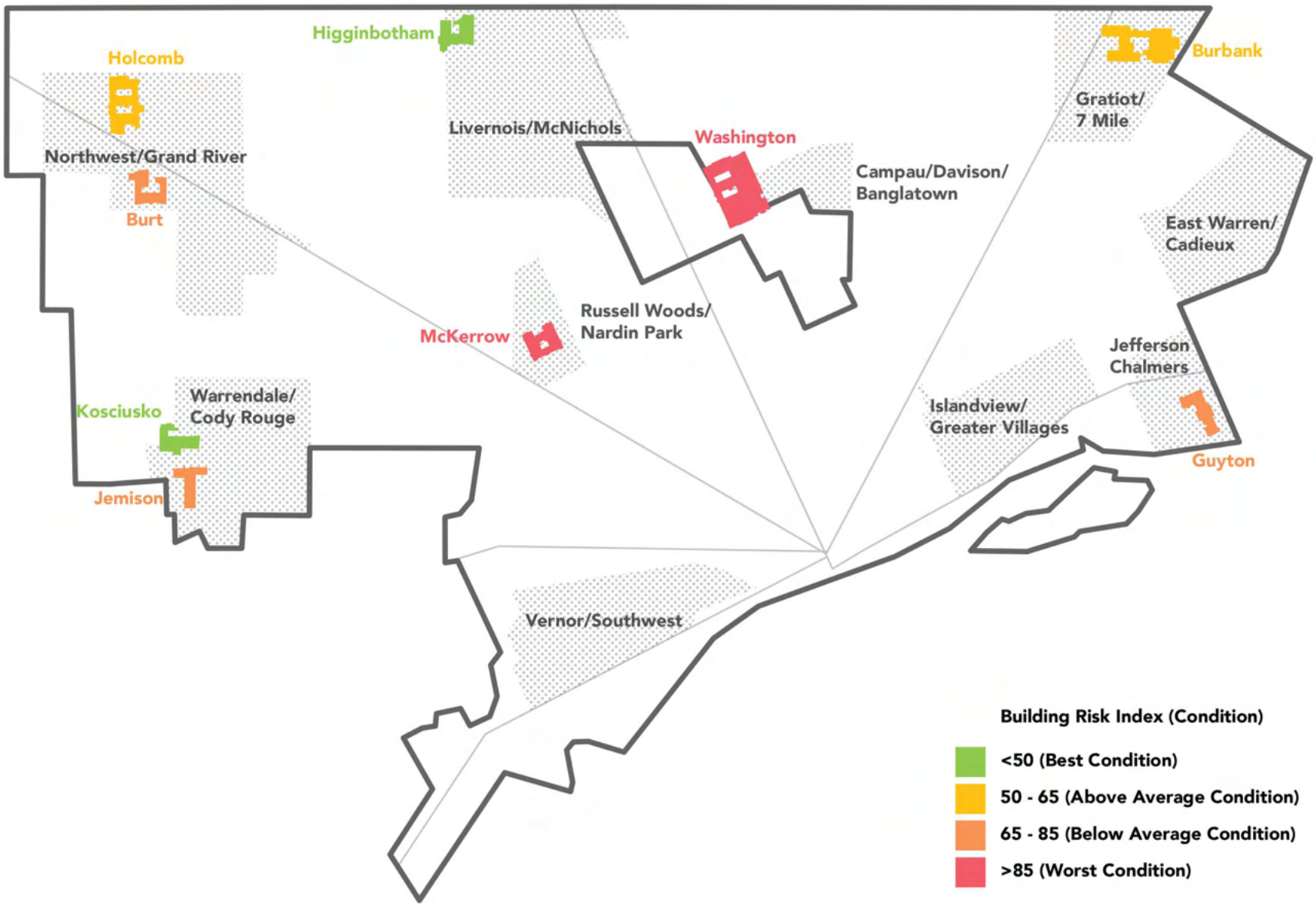
There are nine City-owned vacant schools located in seven different SNF areas. These sites can be placed in three groups:

Group 1: Preserve and Redevelop
Higginbotham, Holcomb, Kosciusko
Three schools in good condition, strong neighborhood and/or market indicators, and good historic integrity. The City should seek redevelopment proposals that will preserve the existing buildings. If no proposals emerge, the buildings should be stabilized and mothballed; demolition should be avoided.

Group 2: Neighborhood Catalysts
Burbank, Guyton, Jemison, Burt
Four schools in fair condition but in stronger neighborhoods. Each of these buildings has challenges that will make redevelopment more difficult, but they should not be left standing vacant for long. The City should be aggressive in marketing these schools for preservation and reuse; however, the City should remain open to development proposals that would demolish parts or all of the current buildings in order to make way for new development that can benefit the surrounding community.

Group 3: Challenge sites
McKerrow, Washington
These schools are in below-average condition and in more distressed neighborhoods, making them the most difficult to rehabilitate. If there is no immediate path to redevelopment, these schools should be stabilized and mothballed while City resources are directed towards other priority development projects in the SNF area. A tactical preservation approach, including site activations that do not use the building itself, could help seed interest in more permanent solutions. However, if building conditions deteriorate or the building becomes a nuisance or public safety hazard, the City should consider demolition in order to minimize negative effects on the surrounding neighborhood.

City-owned VSPs in SNF Areas



Priority Sites: Building Condition

Priority #2: Protect schools still in good condition.

With fewer technical hurdles and lower redevelopment cost, these may provide easier opportunities for a broader pool of potential developers, including smaller and less-experienced developers. The longer these schools remain vacant, the greater the risk that their condition will deteriorate, making them harder to market and substantially driving up the cost to rehabilitate them. For the schools in the best condition, the City must act rapidly; their redevelopment potential may never be higher.

For this study, schools were evaluated and ranked based on the observed condition of structural systems, facades, roofs, and adjusting for the severity, pervasiveness, and potential consequences of distress or damage.

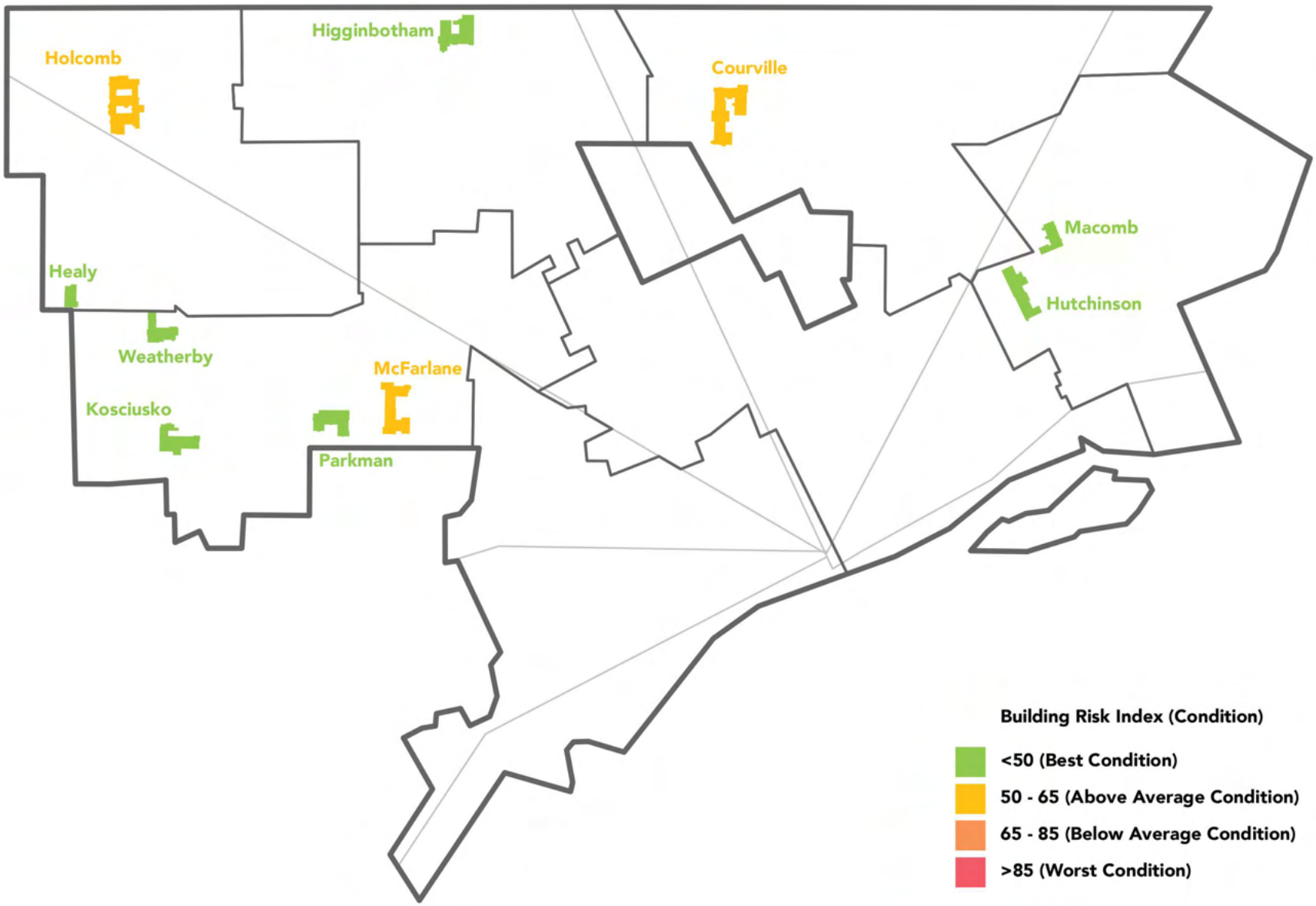
The ten schools in best condition can be placed in three groups:

Group 1: SNF
Higginbotham, Holcomb, Kosciusko
See notes in previous section—these schools are already high-priority sites due to their SNF status; their excellent condition makes them top-priority among SNF schools.

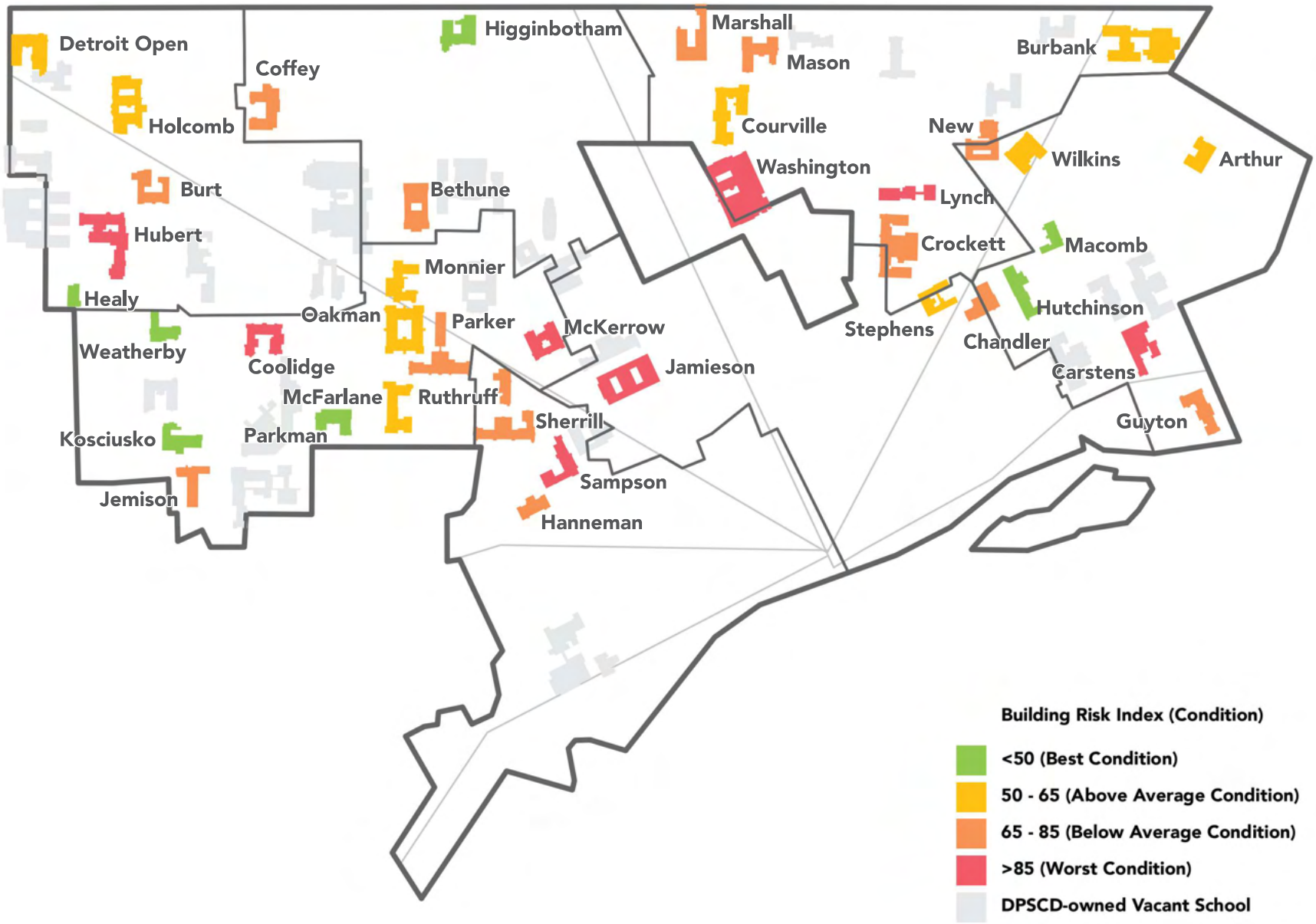
Group 2: Low-hanging Fruit
Weatherby, Healy, Parkman
These West Side schools make up three of the top five schools in best condition. Weatherby and Healy, the top two schools overall, are also small buildings, meaning their estimated rehabilitation costs are significantly lower than most other schools in this study. Because they are in relatively stable neighborhoods, these three schools are among the highest-priority development sites outside SNF areas. These schools should appeal to groups that desire a faster turnaround and a less-challenging project, including smaller developers and community organizations.

Group 3: Save for Later
Macomb, Hutchinson, Courville, McFarlane
These four schools are in good condition, but are located in more distressed neighborhoods or weaker real estate markets. They should be highlighted in the City's marketing efforts, but if no immediate path to redevelopment emerges, they should be stabilized and mothballed for the near- and medium-term.

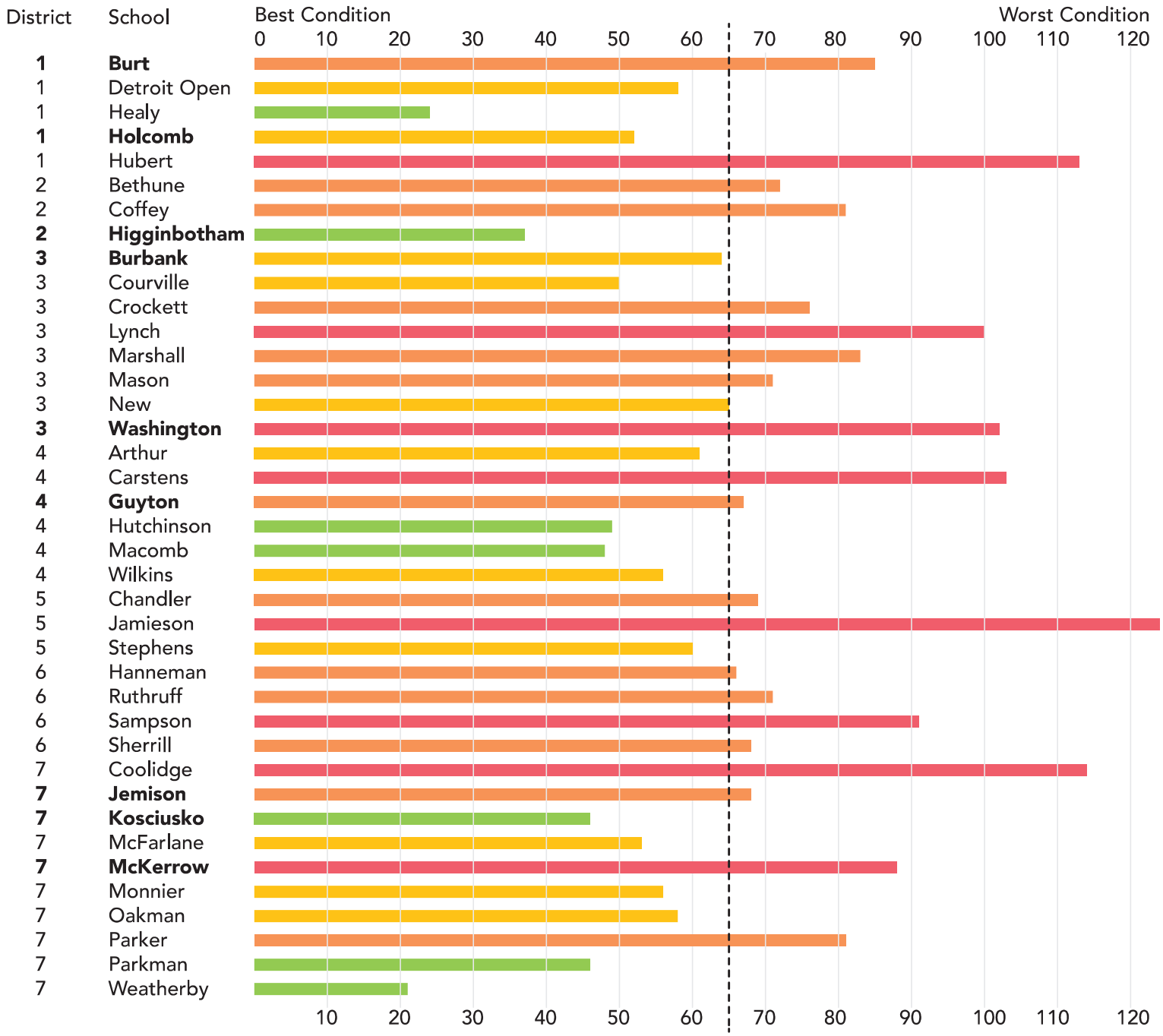
Ten City-owned VSPs in Best Condition



All City-owned VSPs by Condition



City-owned VSPs by Condition



Priority Sites: Neighborhood

Priority #3: Take near-term action at school sites in strong neighborhoods

Vacant schools in more stable, denser neighborhoods should either be redeveloped themselves, or demolished so that their sites can be redeveloped in the near-term. These schools may be the most prominent examples of blight in their neighborhood and allowing them to remain vacant for an extended period of time risks a negative impact on their surroundings. For these schools, security and exterior maintenance should also be priorities, in order to reduce blight and increase safety and curb appeal. Neighborhood stewardship and activation of the school grounds should be encouraged.

The neighborhoods around each vacant school site were evaluated and ranked based on:

- Walkability and access to quality transit
- Availability of civic amenities like parks, schools, libraries and rec centers within walking distance
- Distance to the nearest stable business corridor
- Percentage of vacant and DLBA-owned properties within a quarter-mile radius
- Demographic indicators such as household income, home values, educational attainment, and poverty rates
- Number of active community development and grassroots organizations whose territories include the school site.

The ten schools with the highest scoring neighborhoods can be placed in three groups:

Group 1: SNF Schools
Jemison, Burbank, Guyton, Higginbotham, Kosciusko, Burt

See notes on SNF sites above. Within this set of schools, Higginbotham and Kosciusko of highest priority for preservation because of their excellent condition. The remaining four schools should be marketed for near-term redevelopment of their buildings OR their sites, but should not be left vacant for long.

Group 2: Low-Hanging Fruit
Healy
Healy is in excellent condition and the smallest school in the study, meaning it should be among the least expensive rehabilitation projects. Its surrounding neighborhood stands out for having one of the lowest vacancy rates in the city, with almost no Land Bank-owned properties. This property should be redeveloped immediately, in order to prevent it from becoming a source of blight in an otherwise stable neighborhood.

Group 3: Decisive Action
Hanneman, New, Coffey
These schools are located in promising neighborhoods, but the buildings themselves are in fair to below-average condition. If these buildings are ignored and allowed to deteriorate further, they could have increasingly negative effects on the surrounding neighborhoods. If no clear near- to mid-term path to redevelopment exists, then the City should consider demolishing these schools in order to remove the blight. The remaining open space can be a site for future new construction, or for community-driven, land-based productive or recreational uses.

Priority Sites: Real Estate Market

Priority #4: Redevelop sites located in strong real estate markets

While the multifamily and commercial real estate markets for Detroit's neighborhoods remains weak overall, some areas show promise—particularly in SNF areas, areas near the Downtown-Midtown core, and neighborhoods near Detroit's suburban neighbors. These areas offer higher development potential for the school buildings themselves, as well as potential for new construction on the open space surrounding the school—which may in turn offset the costs of historic rehabilitation. Where the historic school buildings themselves are in good condition or of particular historic significance, preservation should be a priority; if protected, the schools may remain mothballed while being marketed for redevelopment. Where the school buildings are in poor condition or low historic value, demolition may be an option for creating space for new development.

Real estate markets were evaluated on a wide range of criteria for multifamily residential, retail, office, and industrial development, and ranked based on an overall composite score. Inputs included:

- Eligibility for special incentives, including SNF, New Market Tax Credits, and Opportunity Zone status
- Accessibility, including walkscore, proximity to commercial corridors, and distance to nearest freeway access
- The inventory of nearby multifamily, commercial, and industrial buildings, including available square footage, vacancy rates, and rent per square foot and per unit.
- Demographics trends, including projected population change for the overall population and seniors
- Amount of recent construction activity, indicated by building alteration permits.

The ten schools with the best-performing markets can be placed in three groups:

Group 1: SNF, better condition
Holcomb, Higginbotham, Guyton, Burbank

Group 2: SNF, worse condition
Jemison, Burt, Washington, McKerrow

Group 3: Non-SNF opportunities
Detroit Open, Parkman

Priority #5: Identify commercial or mixed-use developments for school sites on commercial corridors

Most schools in this study are located within low-density residential neighborhoods, with deep setbacks and limited street access. While these factors do not rule out commercial, industrial, or mixed-use developments, they do pose challenges. A small number of schools, however, are located directly on commercial corridors, making them uniquely suited for non-residential or mixed-use projects. These four schools are:

Ruthruff
located at the interchange of a major commercial artery and interstate freeway (Livernois and I-96). Also, this site is zoned B4 commercial, the only school with non-residential zoning.

Bethune, Marshall, New
Located on secondary neighborhood-oriented business corridors.

Priority Sites: Proximities

The neighborhood and real estate market recommendations on the previous pages are based on holistic assessments that tie together a number of important location-based factors.

The maps and discussion on the following pages zoom in on some of these important individual factors that contribute to the overall strength of a neighborhood or real estate market: proximity to local economic hubs, freeways, and community resources.

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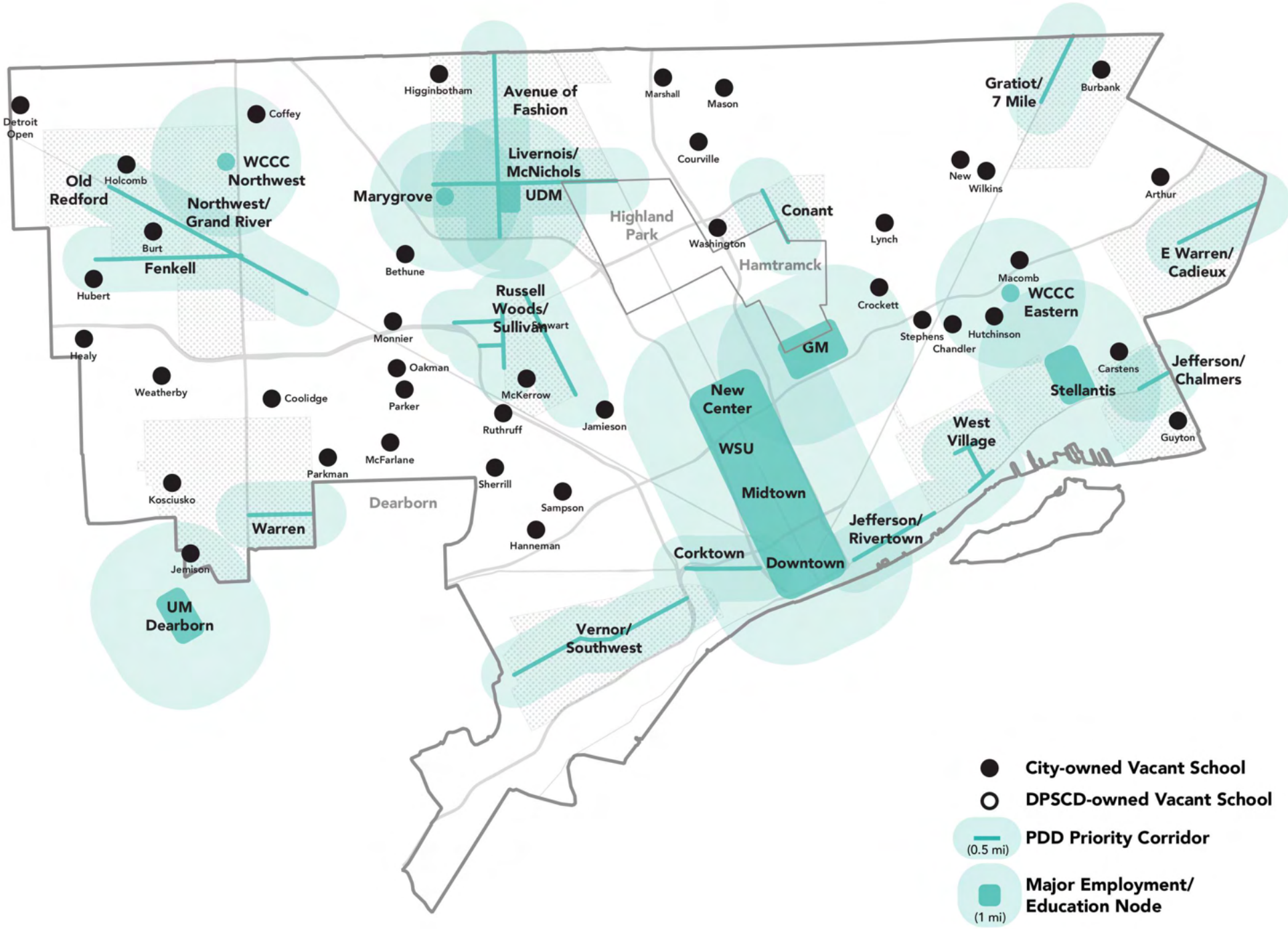
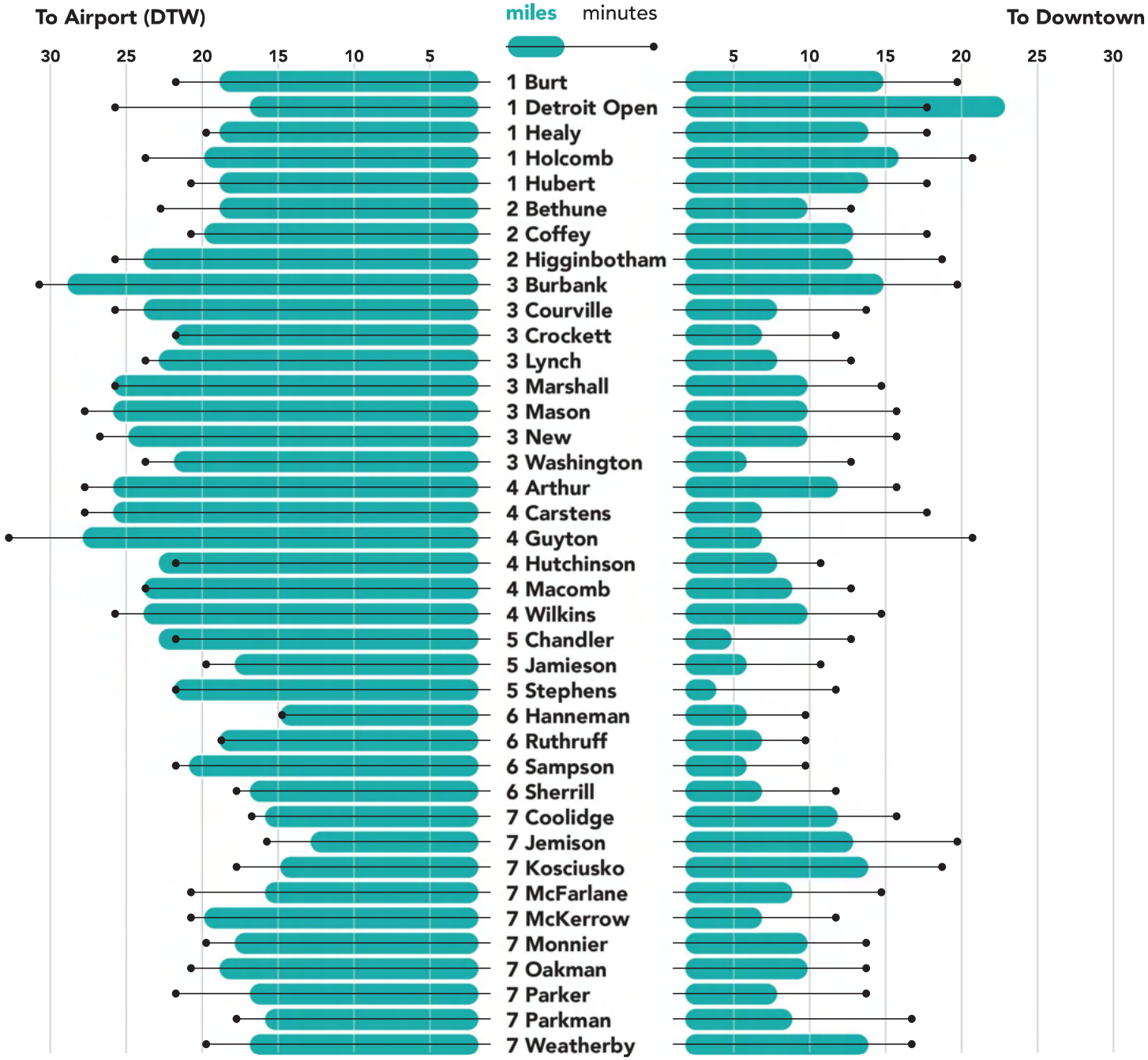
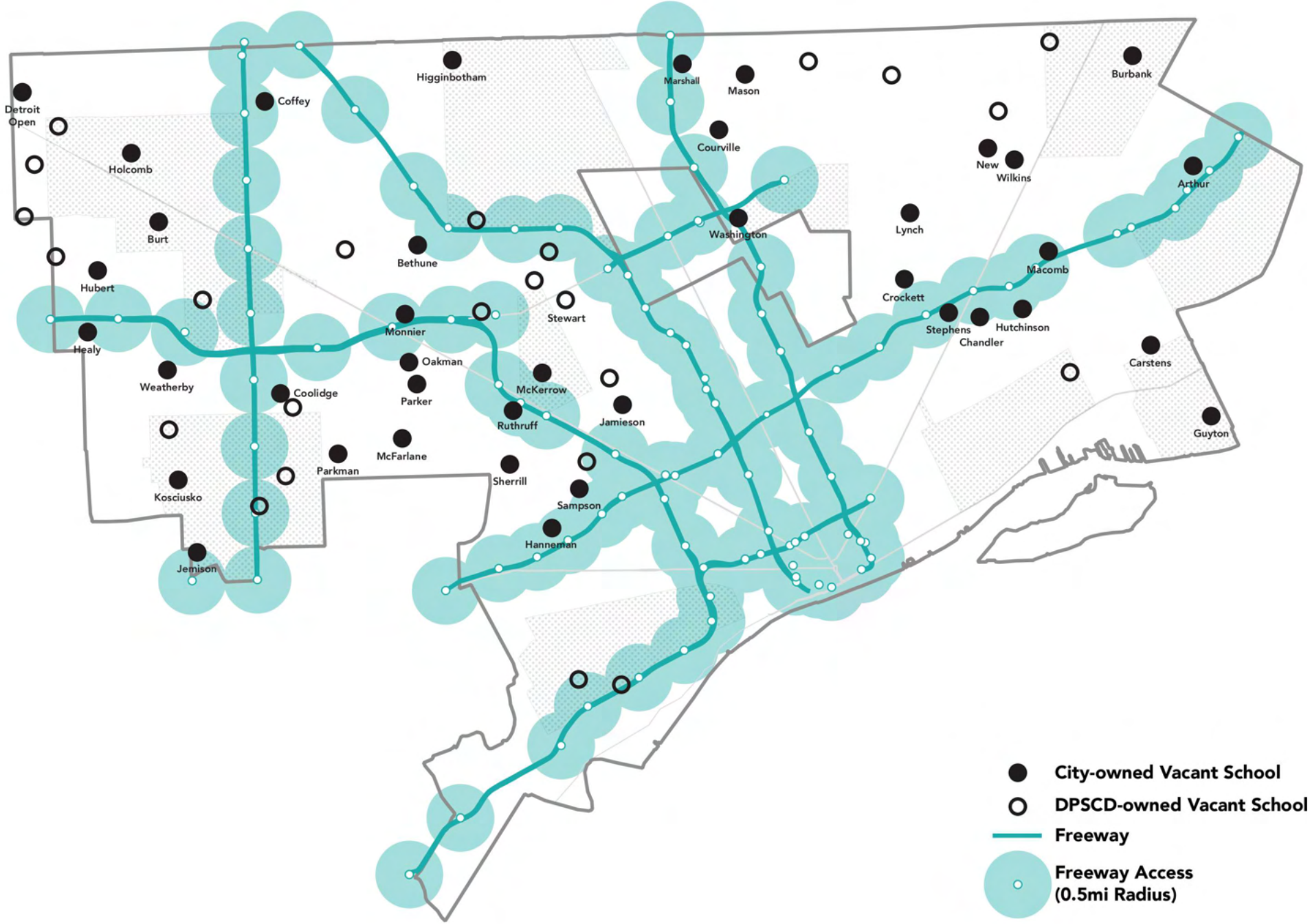
Distance to Economic Nodes



Distance to Airport & Downtown



Distance to Freeway Access



Convenient freeway access is an important consideration for vacant schools in auto-centric Detroit. Proximity to freeway access can be an important selling point for a variety of reasons. For residential uses, easy freeway access means better connections to jobs, shopping, services, entertainment and recreation, and social networks. For commercial uses, proximity to freeways means better access to customers across the city and metro area, as well as more convenient shipping and receiving. Finally, for industrial uses, freeway access is a must for reducing truck travel time—not only for speed and cost reasons, but also to prevent trucks from driving through residential neighborhoods.

The map on the previous page shows City- and DPSCD-owned vacant schools relative to Detroit's freeways and on/off-ramps. Schools located within the light green buffer are within a half-mile of freeway access—about 1 minute drive on local roads.

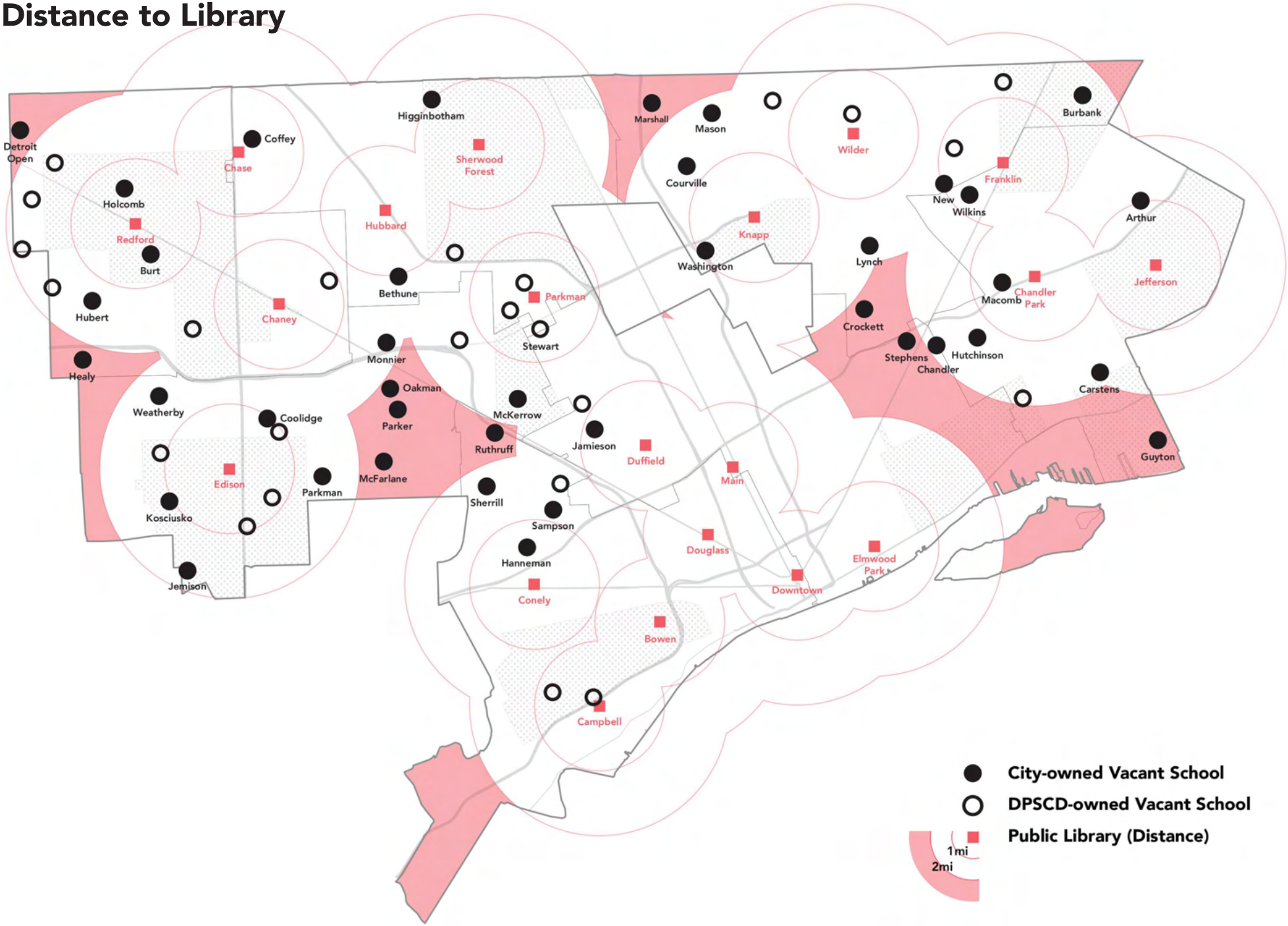
VSPs nearest to freeway access (<0.5 mi/1 min drive)

- 6 Ruthruff (I-96/Livernois: 0.1 mi)
- 7 Monnier (I-96/Grand River: 0.3 mi)
- 4 Arthur (I-94/Cadieux: 0.3 mi)
- 6 Hanneman (I-94/Livernois: 0.3 mi)
- 4 Hutchinson (I-94/French: 0.4 mi)
- 5 Chandler (I-94/Gratiot: 0.4 mi)
- 5 Stephens (I-94/Van Dyke: 0.4 mi)
- 2 Coffey (M-39/7 Mile: 0.4 mi)
- 7 Jemison (M-153/Evergreen: 0.5 mi)
- 4 Macomb (I-94/Conner: 0.5 mi)

VSPs farthest from freeway access

- 1 Detroit Open (M-39/7 Mile: 3.6 mi)
- 4 Guyton (I-94/Outer Dr: 3.0 mi)
- 7 McFarlane (M-39/Joy: 2.2 mi)
- 3 Burbank (I-94/Moross: 2.1 mi)
- 1 Holcomb (M-39/McNichols: 2.1 mi)
- 2 Higginbotham (M-10/7 Mile: 2.1 mi)

Distance to Library



Public libraries are important community anchors. Libraries are not only sites for promoting all-ages learning and literacy, they also offer employment support and servies, access to internet and digital tools, safe spaces for youth and teens, heating and cooling centers for the vulnerable, and meeting space for community groups.

The map on the previous page shows City- and DPSCD-owned vacant schools relative to active Detroit Public Library branches (pre-COVID pandemic). This map can be read in multiple ways. Schools located near libraries may be desirable locations for residential uses, senior housing, shelters, and other social support, since residents can benefit from the library services offered. On the other hand, schools located in library "gap areas" (red areas on map, denoting no library within 2 miles) may be good locations for incorporating educational and community-oriented uses, since there is no library nearby to fill those needs. Vacant school buildings are natural fits for reuse involving educational programming, in large part due to their historic and symbolic role within their communities.

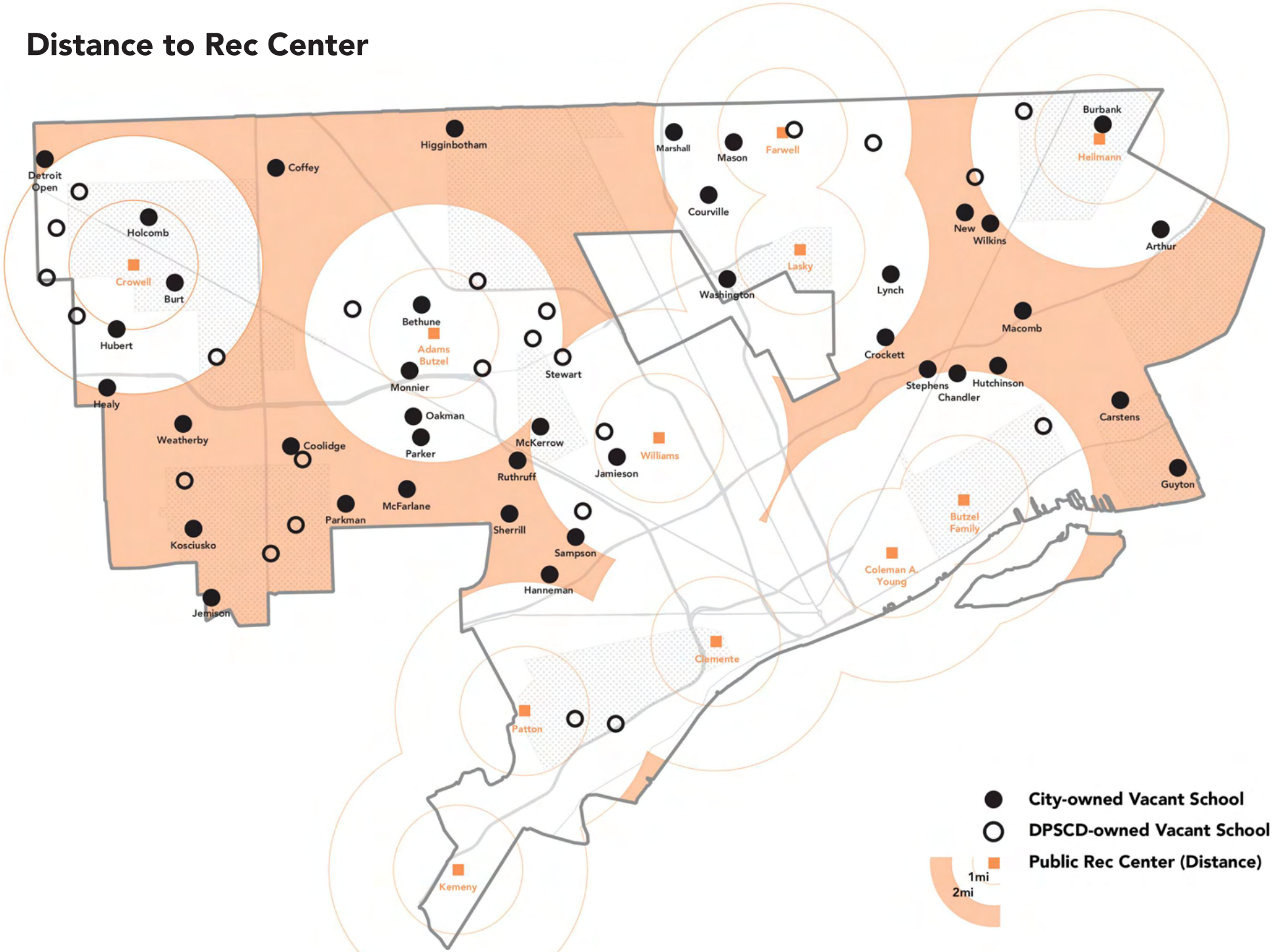
VSPs Near Libraries
(<1 mile/15 min walk)

- 2 Coffey (0.25 mi - Chase)
- 1 Burt (0.5 mi - Redford)
- 1 Holcomb (0.5 mi - Redford)
- 4 Macomb (0.5 mi - Chandler Park)
- 6 Hanneman (0.6 mi - Conely)
- 4 Wilkins (0.7 mi - Franklin)
- 5 Jamieson (0.8 mi - Duffield)
- 3 Washington (0.9 mi - Knapp)
- 7 Coolidge (0.9 mi - Edison)
- 3 New (1.0 mi - Franklin)
- 2 Higginbotham (1.0 mi - Sherwood Forest)

VSPs in Libary Gaps
(>2 mi/30+ min walk)

- 4 Guyton (2.6mi)
- 3 Marshall (2.4 mi)
- 7 McFarlane (2.4 mi)
- 7 Parker (2.4 mi)
- 1 Healy (2.3 mi)
- 1 Detroit Open (2.2 mi)
- 3 Crockett (2.2 mi)
- 5 Stephens (2.2 mi)
- 6 Ruthruff (2.2 mi)
- 7 Oakman (2.1 mi)

Distance to Rec Center



Public recreation centers create healthier communities by providing space for fitness and play; they also strengthen communities by providing space for community meetings and events, and programming and services for all ages.

The map on the previous page shows City- and DPSCD-owned vacant schools relative to City of Detroit Recreation Centers (pre-COVID pandemic). This map can be read in multiple ways. Schools located near rec centers may be desirable locations for residential uses, senior housing, shelters, and other social support, since residents can benefit from the public services offered. On the other hand, schools located in rec center "gap areas" (orange areas on map, denoting no rec center within 2 miles) may be good locations for incorporating recreation and community-oriented uses, since there is no rec center nearby to fill those needs. Vacant school buildings are good fits for reuse involving recreational programming because they typically already include specialized spaces like gyms, playfields, auditoriums, kitchen/serving areas, and parking that can be utilized by the community.

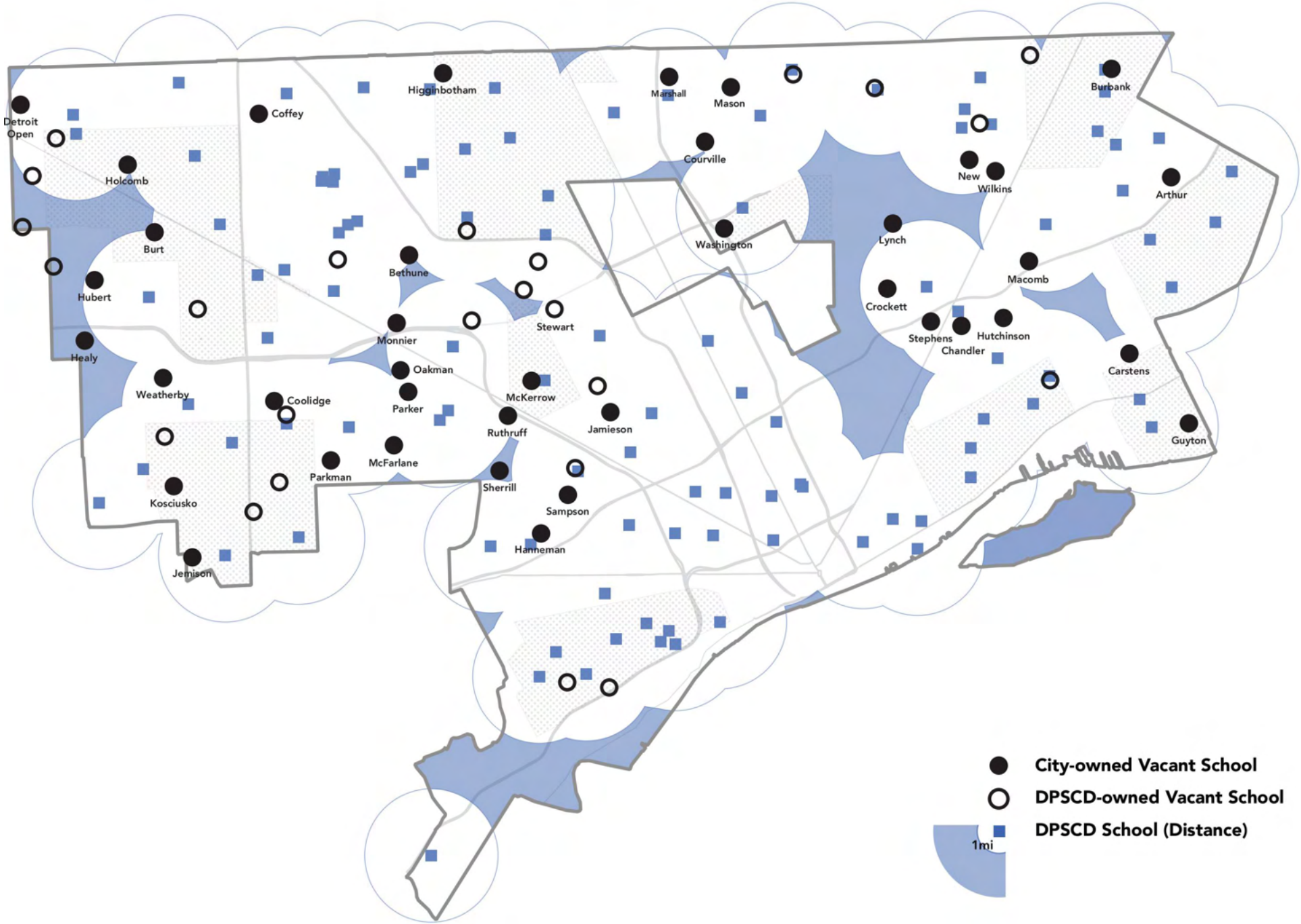
VSPs Near Rec Centers
(<1 mi/15 min walk)

- 3 Burbank (0.2 mi - Heilmann)
- 2 Bethune (0.4 mi - Adams Butzel)
- 7 Monnier (0.6 mi - Adams Butzel)
- 1 Burt (0.7 mi - Crowell)
- 5 Jamieson (0.7 mi - Williams)
- 1 Holcomb (0.7 mi - Crowell)
- 3 Mason (0.8 mi - Farwell)
- 1 Hubert (1.0 mi - Crowell)

VSPs in Rec Center Gaps
(>2 mi/30+ min walk)

- 7 Jemison (5.2 mi)
- 7 Kosciusko (4.2 mi)
- 4 Guyton (3.4 mi)
- 2 Higginbotham (3.2 mi)
- 4 Carstens (2.9 mi)
- 4 Macomb (2.9 mi)
- 7 Parkman (2.9 mi)
- 7 Coolidge (2.8 mi)
- 2 Coffey (2.7 mi)
- 6 Sherrill (2.6 mi)
- 7 Weatherby (2.5 mi)
- 7 McFarlane (2.4 mi)
- 3 New (2.4 mi)
- 6 Ruthruff (2.2 mi)
- 6 Hanneman (2.1 mi)
- 4 Wilkins (2.1 mi)
- 1 Detroit Open (2.1 mi)
- 5 Stephens (2.1 mi)
- 4 Hutchinson (2.1 mi)
- 6 Sampson (2 mi)

Distance to Active Public School



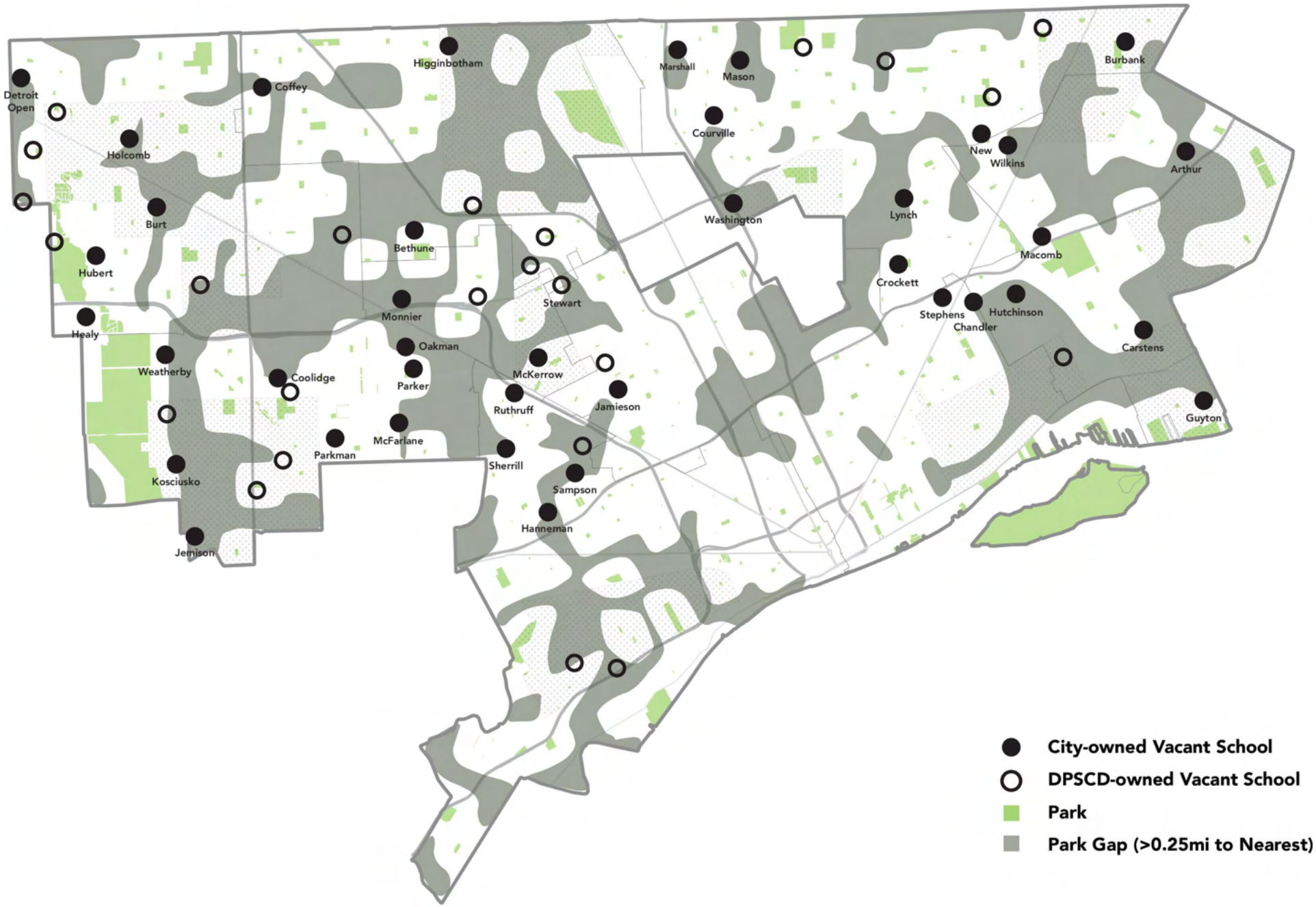
Like libraries and public rec centers, public schools are key anchors in their communities—in fact, they are perhaps the most important anchor of all. Naturally, a common idea for reusing a vacant school is to not repurpose it at all, but rather re-open it as a school. Because the context for this study has been a public school district undergoing a significant downsizing and consolidation of its facilities, it was understood that City-owned vacant schools would most likely not become schools again. However, vacant school sites may still be repurposed as sites for learning, health and recreation, community building, and other social services—important services public schools offer in addition to classroom education.

The map on the previous page shows City- and DPSCD-owned vacant schools relative to active public schools. This map can be read in multiple ways. Vacant schools located near active schools may be desirable locations for residential uses, particularly family-oriented housing. On the other hand, vacant schools located in school "gap areas" (blue areas on map, denoting no school within 1 mile) may be good locations for reuse incorporating education, training, youth services, and community-oriented programming.

VSPs in School Gap (>1mi/15 min walk)

- 1 Healy (1.2 mi)
- 6 Sherrill (1.1 mi)
- 3 Lynch (1.1 mi)
- 2 Bethune (1 mi)
- 1 Burt (1 mi)

Distance to Park



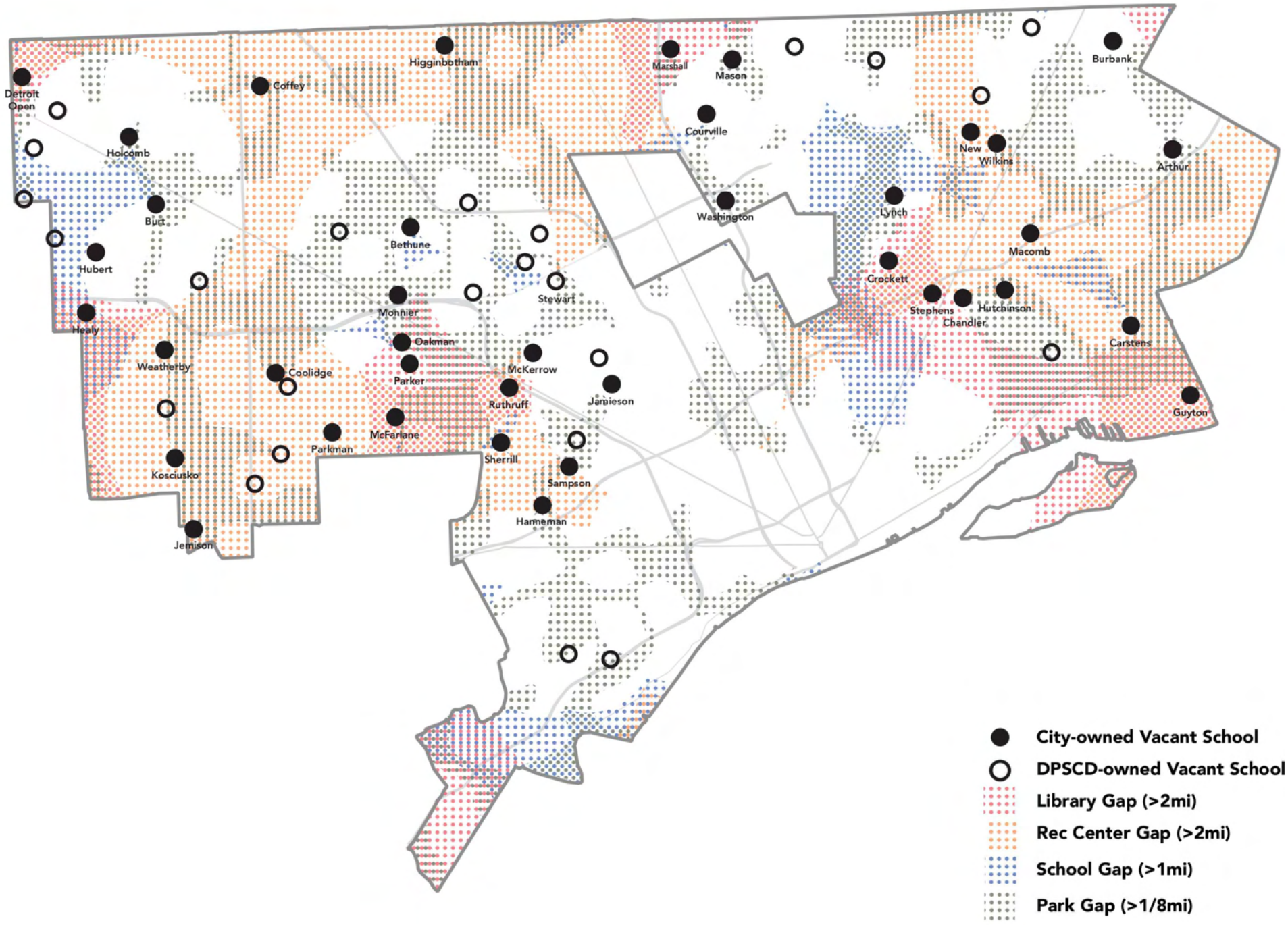
Detroit's public school grounds often feature large grassy playfields, playground equipment, sports courts, and gardens. As a result, schools have long served as *de facto* neighborhood parks, forming a network of recreational and green space that exists alongside the official city park system. The unfortunate consequence of widespread school closures means that many of these school parks have fallen into disrepair, and are no longer available to the community. At some vacant schools included in this study, neighborhood residents continued to mow schoolyards and maintain school playgrounds themselves, rather than lose their local "park."

The map on the previous page shows City- and DPSCD-owned vacant schools relative to city parks. This map can be read in multiple ways. Schools located near parks may be desirable locations for many types of reuse, including residential, mixed-use, and community programming. Schools located in park "gap" areas (grey areas on map, denoting no park within 0.25 mi) are excellent opportunities for providing walkable neighborhood green space, whether as a new city park, or as a privately-managed space in connection with other development on site.

VSPs in Park Gap (>0.25mi)

- 7 Jemison (0.6 mi)
- 3 Washington (0.6 mi)
- 7 Monnier (0.6 mi)
- 4 Hutchinson (0.5 mi)
- 7 McFarlane (0.5 mi)
- 3 Mason (0.4 mi)
- 4 Arthur (0.4 mi)
- 6 Sherrill (0.4 mi)
- 7 Oakman (0.3 mi)
- 6 Sampson (0.3 mi)
- 3 Marshall (0.3 mi)
- 4 Carstens (0.3 mi)
- 5 Chandler (0.3 mi)
- 2 Coffey (0.3 mi)
- 7 Kosciusko (0.3 mi)
- 4 Guyton (0.3 mi)
- 3 Courville (0.3 mi)
- 2 Higginbotham (0.3 mi)
- 6 Hanneman (0.3 mi)
- 6 Ruthruff (0.3 mi)

Community Resource Gaps



The city maps on the previous pages highlight resource "gaps"—areas that lack easy access to key community resources like libraries, rec centers, schools, and parks. In Detroit, like many other cities, these gap areas often overlap: if a community lacks sufficient resources in one area, there is a good chance that it may lack resources in other areas as well.

The map on the previous page shows library, rec center, school, and park gaps overlaid on the same map. Seventeen City-owned vacant schools—almost half of those in the study—are located in areas with at least two overlapping resource gaps. When redeveloping those sites, strong consideration should be given to including inclusive, community-oriented programming and amenities that help fill existing resource gaps.

The map also shows that there are a handful of schools that are in relatively well-served areas with no major resource gaps. These schools should be considered as priority development sites that can both benefit from the existing network of services, as well as help further stabilize and catalyze their neighborhoods.

VSPs with 3 overlapping resource gaps

- 4 Guyton (Library, Rec Center, Park)
- 6 Ruthruff (Library, Rec Center, Park)
- 6 Sherrill (Rec Center, School, Park)
- 7 McFarlane (Library, Rec Center, Park)

VSPs with 2 overlapping resource gaps

- 1 Detroit Open (Library, Rec Center)
- 1 Healy (Library, School)
- 2 Coffey (Rec Center, Park)
- 2 Higginbotham (Rec Center, Park)
- 3 Marshall (Library, Park)
- 4 Carstens (Rec Center, Park)
- 4 Hutchinson (Rec Center, Park)
- 5 Stephens (Library, Rec Center)
- 6 Hanneman (Rec Center, Park)
- 6 Sampson (Rec Center, Park)
- 7 Jemison (Rec Center, Park)
- 7 Kosciusko (Rec Center, Park)
- 7 Oakman (Library, Park)

VSPs with no resource gaps

- 1 Holcomb
- 1 Hubert
- 3 Burbank
- 5 Jamieson
- 7 McKerrow

Priority: Historic Significance

Priority #6: Preserve school buildings with the greatest historic significance

While all of the schools in this study are, by definition, of local historic significance, a handful exhibited high degree of historic integrity and architectural distinction. These include both schools which have totally unique architecture and those which best exemplify a particular style or era of school construction in Detroit. They tend to have minimal modifications and cohesive architecture throughout; most—but not all—are in good condition.

The eleven schools which rate highest for historic significance can be divided into four groups:

Group 1: SNF schools
Holcomb, Higginbotham, Guyton, Kosciusko
These schools are all in above-average to excellent condition, and as noted in previous sections, should be immediately and aggressively marketed for historic rehabilitation and redevelopment. Extra emphasis should be placed on securing and protecting these buildings, including waterproofing roofs, ensuring proper drainage, and deterring further scrapping and vandalism.

Group 2: Non-SNF schools with high potential
Healy, Crockett
Healy, as noted in previous sections, is among the highest priority non-SNF schools due to its excellent condition, small size, and stable neighborhood. It is also an excellent example of 1950s modern school architecture in the city. Meanwhile, Crockett should be a challenging project due to its size and distressed neighborhood; however, its potential lies in its large, open site and proximity to major manufacturers. A large and expensive rehab like Crockett may be out of reach for most developers, it could be saved by a top-tier industrial partner willing to preserve historic school as a legacy project, in return for development rights on the large adjacent parcel.

Group 3: Non-SNF schools with good condition but uncertain potential
Macomb, Courville, Oakman
These three school buildings are unique and well-worth preserving in themselves, but they are located in more challenged markets which may make near-term redevelopment difficult. These buildings should be preserved and mothballed while the City pursues a patient, potentially longer-term search for an appropriate development partner. These sites may be best suited for development by community-based or mission-driven organizations that have a strong commitment to the immediate neighborhood and an interest in preserving the school as local heritage.

Group 4: Non-SNF schools in below-average condition and uncertain potential
Marshall, Carstens
These two schools are historically significant but will be challenging to rehabilitate and are in distressed neighborhoods. The City should take basic measures to waterproof the roofs and prevent further deterioration. The marketing approach should be the same as though the development timeline will likely be the longest of all of the priority schools listed so far.


Holcomb


Higginbotham


Guyton


Guyton - Auditorium


Kosciusko


Healy


Crockett - Gym


Crockett


Macomb

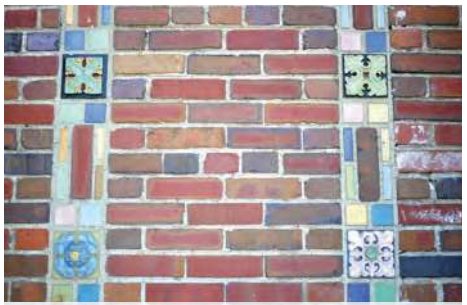

Macomb - Parapet


Courville


Courville - Auditorium

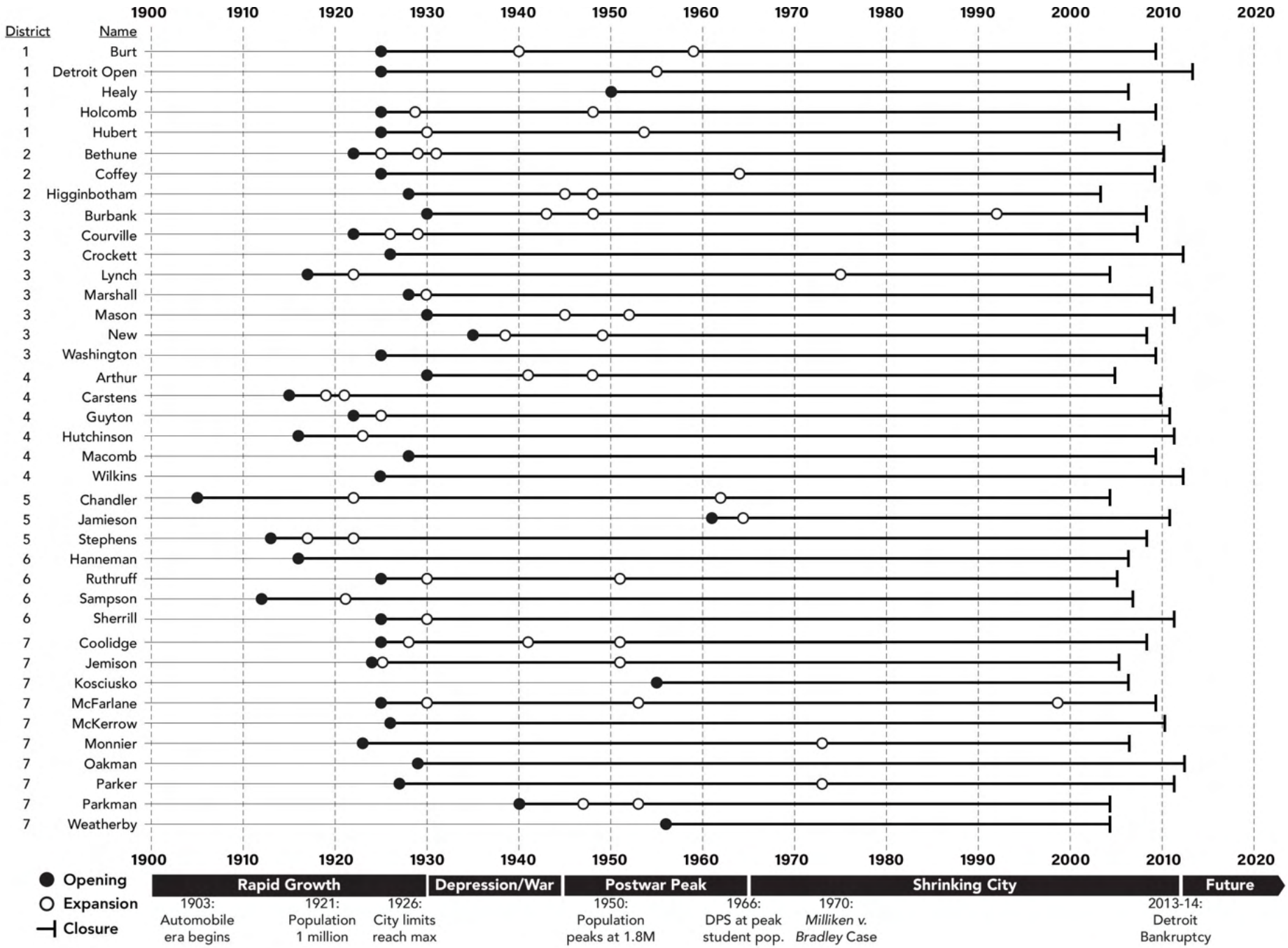

Oakman


Marshall


Marshall - Facade

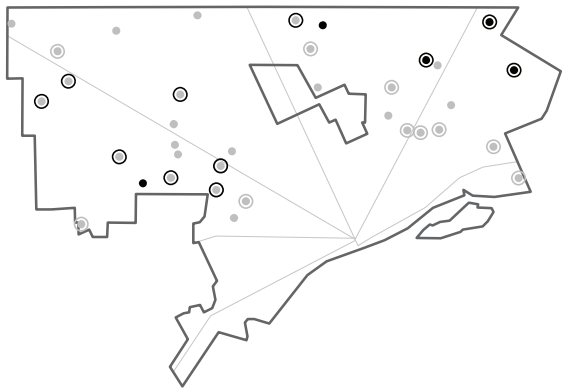

Carstens

Construction and Service Timeline



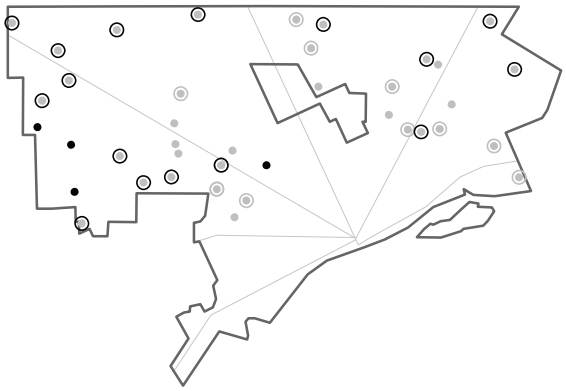
1900-1930: Rapid Growth

The early 20th century was a period of explosive growth in Detroit, as the auto industry took off. Much of the school construction shown above occurred in areas that were annexed by the city between 1906 and 1926.



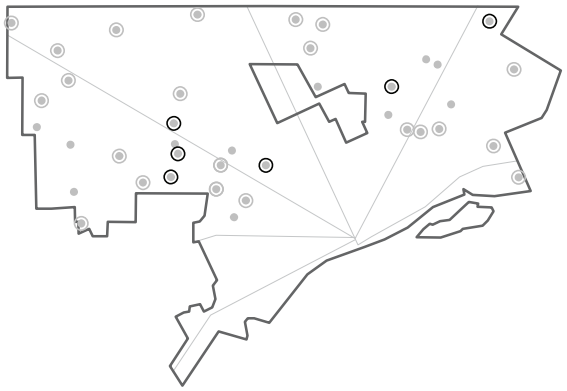
1930-1945: Great Depression / WWII

Detroit saw a wave of school construction around 1930, but building and population growth cooled as the Depression continued. However, population swelled as wartime industry picked up, leading to another wave of school expansion.



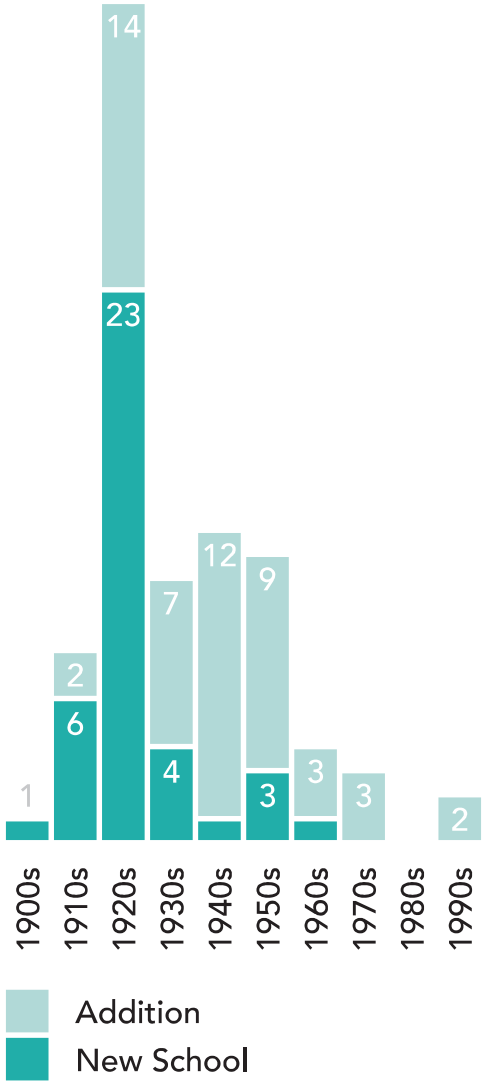
1945-1966: Postwar Peak

Detroit reached its population peak of over 1.8 million in 1950, and Detroit Public Schools reached its peak of nearly 300,000 students in 1966. School design in this era favored simple and modern architecture.



1966-Present: Shrinking City

The public school has system lost over 250,000 students since its 1966 peak. Only a handful of the schools in this study have been updated in the last 60 years.



Note: The visuals on these two pages include only the historic City-owned vacant schools that were part of this study. Many DPSCD schools that are still in service were constructed or updated in recent decades.

Other Recommendations:

Judge the redevelopment potential of each building holistically.

Most, if not all, of the schools in this study can be rehabilitated from a structural/architectural standpoint. The cost of rehabilitation is linked to the type, severity, and extent of a building's distress. Each building's viability ultimately depends on whether the demand and available resources can justify the cost of rehabilitation.

- **Recommendation:** Any decision to rehabilitate, mothball, or demolish a historic vacant school should be based on careful consideration of the current building condition, location and market strength, architectural features, historical significance, and availability of local development partners.

Consider the development potential of open space within and adjacent to the school property, in addition to the building itself.

By design, school sites have a large amount of open space to accommodate playfields and parking lots. At most school properties in this study, the built area takes up less than 20% of the total site, and developable open areas of 1-2 acres or more are common. Looking beyond the property lines, many school sites are adjacent to groupings of Detroit Land Bank Authority-owned residential parcels which could potentially be bundled and developed together with the school. A variety of on- and off-site open space configurations may provide opportunities for new one- and two-family residential, multifamily, mixed-use, or larger-scale construction. While many historic school rehab projects may not pencil out as stand-alone projects, encouraging developers to include new construction alongside historic reuse of existing school buildings may increase the number of viable projects.

- **Recommendation:** Bundle multi-parcel clusters of vacant DLBA land adjacent to vacant school sites as incentive for developers to rehabilitate historic school buildings.

- **Recommendation:** Ease zoning restrictions on school sites and vacant land bundles zoned R1 and R2 to encourage denser, context-appropriate new construction. The current School Adaptive Reuse Ordinance allows expanded conditional uses in existing school buildings themselves, but these provisions do not necessarily apply to other non-rehab development on school properties.

Protect vacant school roofs.

Roofing and roof drains are a vacant school's greatest vulnerability. Deterioration or damage to the roofing membrane, coping and flashing, and roof drains allows water to infiltrate the building, which causes damage to the façade, interior finishes, and structural systems.

- **Recommendation:** Take immediate steps to repair or cover rooftops in order to prevent further water infiltration. Clean, repair, and/or redirect failed internal roof drains to ensure that water is properly drained away from the school.

- **Recommendation:**Secure school buildings to discourage theft and vandalism of metal components from rooftops, including flashing, coping, drain elements, ventilators, and mechanical units.

- **Recommendation:** Prioritize waterproofing, drainage, and security measures at high-priority

redevelopment sites and schools that are in the best overall condition.

Clearboard vacant school windows and doors, instead of plywood.

Virtually none of the 39 City-owned vacant schools were completely secure during the team's site visits. Although most City-owned schools are boarded up with plywood and secured with a padlock, nearly all of them had been breached by trespassers. Plywood appears to be easily removed and weakens after long exposure to the elements.

Opaque window coverings make it difficult for police and concerned neighbors to see inside; this may provide cover for trespassing, scrapping, and other illegal activities that may occur inside these schools.

Opaque window coverings also reduce the appeal of the school buildings. First, boarded windows signal vacancy and abandonment from the exterior. Second, by rendering the schools completely dark, opaque coverings make it difficult to fully inspect, document, and appreciate the qualities of the interior spaces. Lighting has an important effect on how the spaces are perceived, and schools that had more natural light—even when a result of boards being removed—simply felt safer, more pleasant, and more memorable. Although difficult to quantify, this psychological effect should be considered as an important part of wooing potential buyers.

- **Recommendation:** Transition to using clear PCB security boards instead of plywood. They are more secure, more durable, allow views into the building, and are more aesthetically appealing.

- **Recommendation:** Focus security efforts on schools that are in best condition first, to limit damage from scrapping and vandalism.

- **Recommendation:** When window assemblies are still intact (originals or replacements), take care not to damage frames or lites when installing security measures.

Establish dedicated channels for inter-departmental communication and coordination regarding the disposition of vacant school properties.

There are many important stakeholders that play a role in the disposition of vacant schools, including PDD, HRD, DBA, DON, Mayor's Office, GSD, CPC, DPSCD, DEGC, and DLBA. These stakeholders have related, yet independent sets of priorities, knowledge, and tools which can shape the future of Detroit's vacant schools. Vacant school projects and initiatives within each department may overlap or conflict, leading to more inefficient decision-making processes.

- **Recommendation:** Take active steps to promote communication and knowledge-sharing among City departments, DPSCD, and other partner organizations to ensure a cohesive, coordinated, citywide approach to vacant school disposition.

- **Recommendation:** establish an inter-departmental task force that will meet regularly to identify priority development sites, provide updates on marketing and development leads, and coordinate vacant school strategy with the City's broader planning and development goals.

- **Recommendation:** identify a primary point of contact within city government to track vacant school redevelopment inquiries, both internal and external to the City. Create a central clearinghouse for

vacant school information that is visible to all relevant City agencies.

Make full information about the vacant school portfolio available to all relevant City departments and partner agencies, and promote education about school redevelopment opportunities.

City-owned vacant schools are challenging redevelopment projects and will require a concerted effort from the City to market them effectively. The City agencies most closely involved in planning and real estate development must have an awareness and understanding of the current citywide portfolio of properties, including their locations, building and site characteristics, physical conditions, potential uses, and opportunities and barriers to redevelopment. All should agree on how vacant school properties fit within the larger portfolio of potential development sites across the City. And, each department should identify a champion to support vacant school redevelopment efforts.

- **Recommendation:** PDD project staff should lead a presentation or training workshop to educate other teams and departments about the results of this project and the opportunities that exist for redeveloping vacant school properties.

- **Recommendation:** Establish an interdepartmental task force or piggy-back on existing City working groups that can regularly meet to exchange information and updates about vacant school development activities.

- **Recommendation:** Create information clearing house for vacant school information that is easily accessible by all relevant City agencies.

Expand the pool of potential developers and development partners as much as possible, both locally and outside of Detroit.

With 63 vacant school sites included in this study alone, many requiring significant resources and creativity to repurpose, the City and DPSCD must take active steps to generate interest and engage with a broad pool of potential purchasers. The wide variety of potential projects will require a large and diverse group of development partners, and may require expertise or resources that are not currently available locally. Innovative marketing approaches will help raise local, national, and international awareness of the importance and value of these school sites, making it more likely that a larger number of sites can be redeveloped.

- **Recommendation:** Partner with media such as TV, film, press, and online outlets to publicize the schools, highlight their historical and cultural significance, and advertise their potential development opportunities.

- **Recommendation:** Partner with local artists, creators, and community groups to stage site-specific interventions or events at vacant school sites; this is an opportunity to draw positive attention to these sites via temporary activations, while highlighting the potential for longer-term solutions. Local precedents include DLECTRICITY, Murals in the Market, the DIA's InsidelOut program, and Detroit Month of Design.

Priority Development Schools

The following schools ranked among the top ten in at least one of the priority categories. This list shows the top ten schools overall, along with 16 "honorable mentions" which had at least one distinguishing strength, even if they were weaker in other areas.

Rank	Dist.	Name	Address	SNF	Condition	Neighborhood	Market	History	Corridor
1	2	Higginbotham	20119 Wisconsin	●	●	●	●	●	
2	1	Holcomb	18100 Bentler	●	●		●	●	
3	1	Healy	12834 West Parkway		●	●		●	
4	7	Weatherby	12099 Fielding		●				
5	4	Guyton	355 Philip	●		●	●	●	
6	7	Kosciusko	20390 Tireman	●	●	●		●	
7	7	Jemison	6201 Auburn	●		●	●		
8	3	Burbank	15600 E State Fair	●		●	●		
9	7	Parkman	15000 Mackenzie		●		●		
10	1	Burt	20710 Pilgrim	●		●	●		
	7	McKerrow	4800 Collingwood	●			●		
	3	Washington	13000 Dequindre	●			●		
	4	Macomb	12051 Evanston		●			●	
	3	New	17142 Rowe			●			●
	3	Marshall	1255 E State Fair					●	●
	3	Courville	18040 St. Aubin		●			●	
	4	Hutchinson	5220 French		●				
	7	McFarlane	8900 Cheyenne		●				
	6	Hanneman	6420 McGraw			●			
	2	Coffey	19300 Lindsay			●			
	1	Detroit Open	24601 Frisbee				●		
	4	Carstens	2550 Coplin					●	
	3	Crockett	8950 St. Cyril					●	
	7	Oakman	12920 Wadsworth					●	
	6	Ruthruff	6311 W Chicago						●
	2	Bethune	10763 Fenkell						●

Comparing Schools

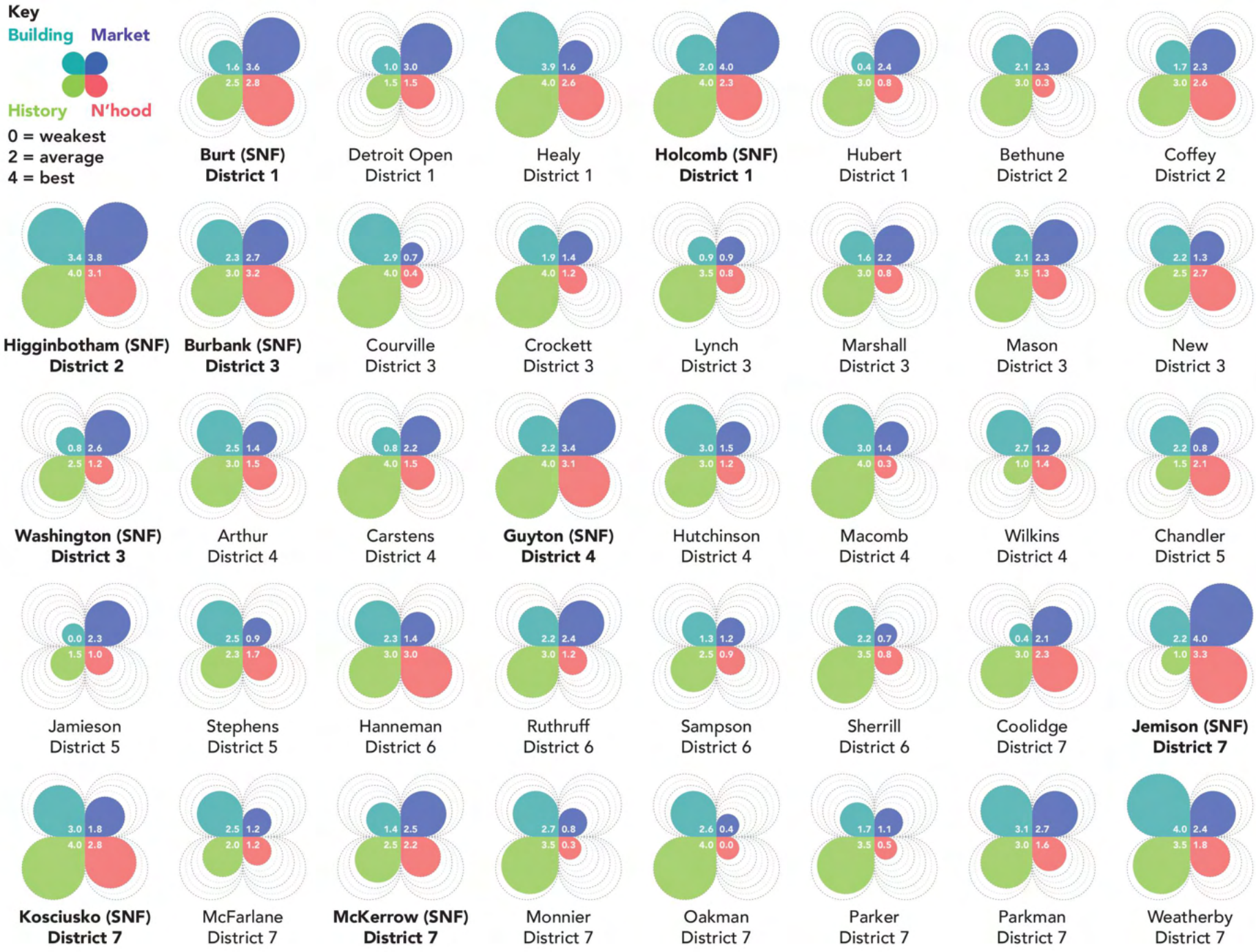
The diagram on the facing page visualizes each of the 39 City-owned vacant schools based on their relative performance in the four priority categories of building condition, neighborhood strength, market strength, and historic significance. Each school was graded in each category on a normalized 4-point scale, with 4 being the best, and 0 the worst. Larger bubbles represent better performance in a given category.

This diagram makes it clear that each school has different strengths and weaknesses, which should inform the school's individual disposition approach. Some schools, like Higginbotham, Guyton, and Kosciusko, score high well across categories; other high-priority schools like Jemison and Burt, are outstanding in one or two areas, but weak in others.

Schools which score relatively poorly in most categories, such as Jamieson or Lynch, are not necessarily non-viable sites. Even these challenging schools may have appeal to a mission-driven local developer who places high value on a school's particular location. A targeted match-making approach might be better for those schools, in contrast to the higher-performing school sites which will have broader appeal and can find success through a competitive, open call for proposals.

There are many other ways to evaluate this highly diverse set of schools besides the major priority categories discussed up to this point. The following pages visualize other ways of seeing and sorting Detroit's vacant schools.

Strengths and Weaknesses



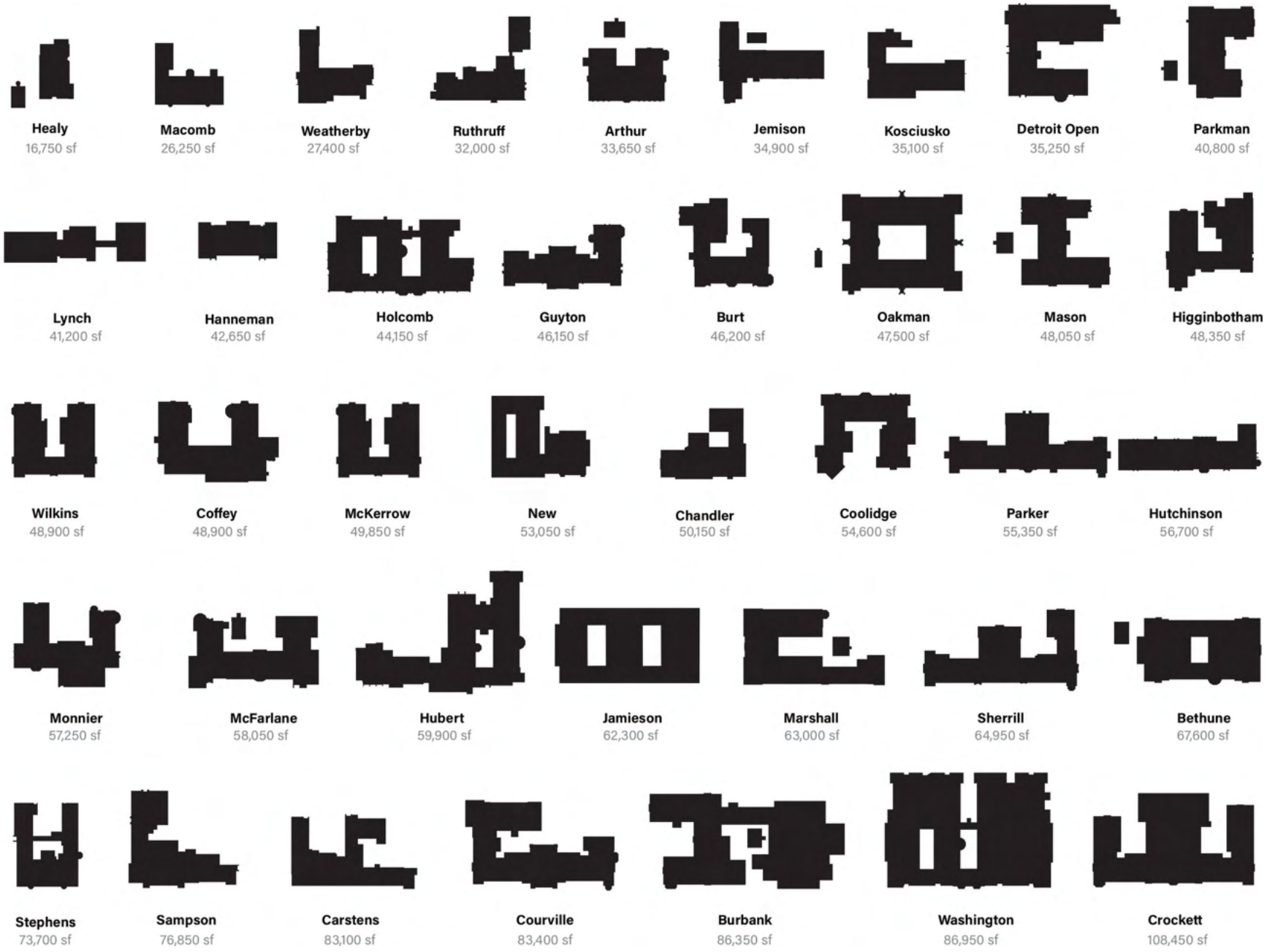
Floor Area

The historic vacant schools in this study come in all shapes and sizes. The smallest school, Healy, is less than 17,000 square feet; the largest school, Crockett, is six times as large, with over 108,000 sf. The average size is about 50,000 sf.

The image at right shows the footprints of each school building arranged from smallest to largest. You'll notice that the size of a school's footprint doesn't always tell us how much floor area it has. For example, Hanneman and Holcomb on the second row are have similar floor areas, even though Holcomb looks much larger. This is because Hanneman has three levels, while Holcomb only has one.

Building size can affect the rehab potential of a vacant school in a variety of ways. While larger buildings provide a lot more space, they are typically more expensive to repair up front and to operate and maintain over time.

Building Footprint & Gross Floor Area



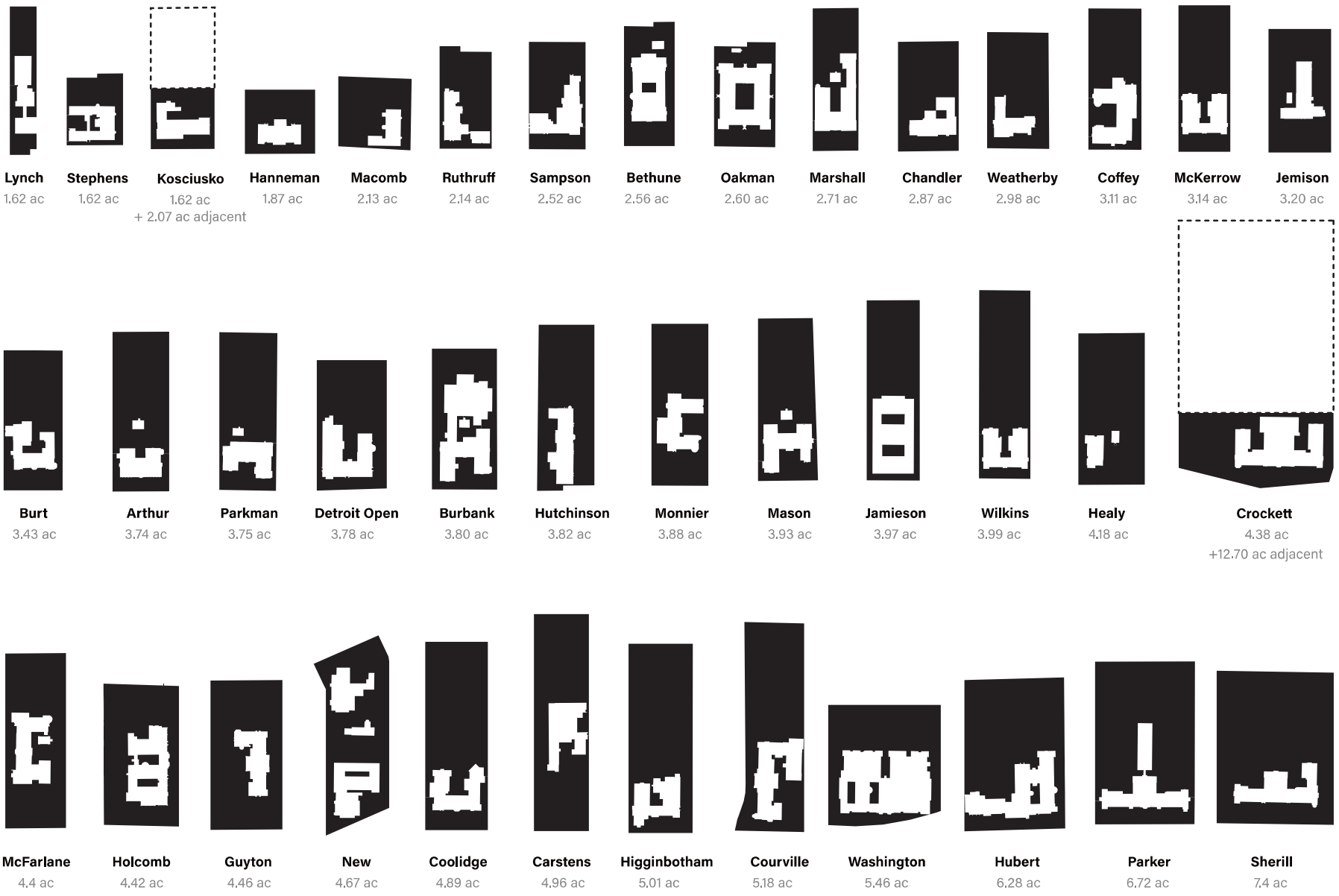
Floor Area

The schools in this study can also be measured by the size of their site (the piece of land the building sits on). Like building area, school sites vary in both shape and size. Lynch is the smallest site, at just 1.62 acres); Sherrill is the largest, with a whopping 7.4 ac site—two full city blocks! The average, meanwhile, is 3.6 ac, which is close to a full city block.

Two school sites, at Kosciusko and Crockett, are adjacent to additional City-owned open land. Although these neighboring parcels are not part of the school property, but they make the school site feel much larger. If Crockett's site was combined with the neighboring parcel, it would be the largest area in the study by far, at over 17 ac.

The size of a school site has an impact on the possibilities for redeveloping the property. The size and position of the school building on the property also matters. Many schools with larger sites have a lot of leftover land. For example, most school properties consist of 75% or more open space, while Healy's site is over 90% open space. Of course, that open space could be preserved as parkland or green space. New buildings could also be built on that land to make the site more dense. On the other hand, schools with small sites like Stephens or spread-out buildings like Oakman, Burbank, and Washington don't have much land left over so there isn't much opportunity to build more without demolishing the existing building.

Reverse Figure-Ground: Site Area



Accessibility

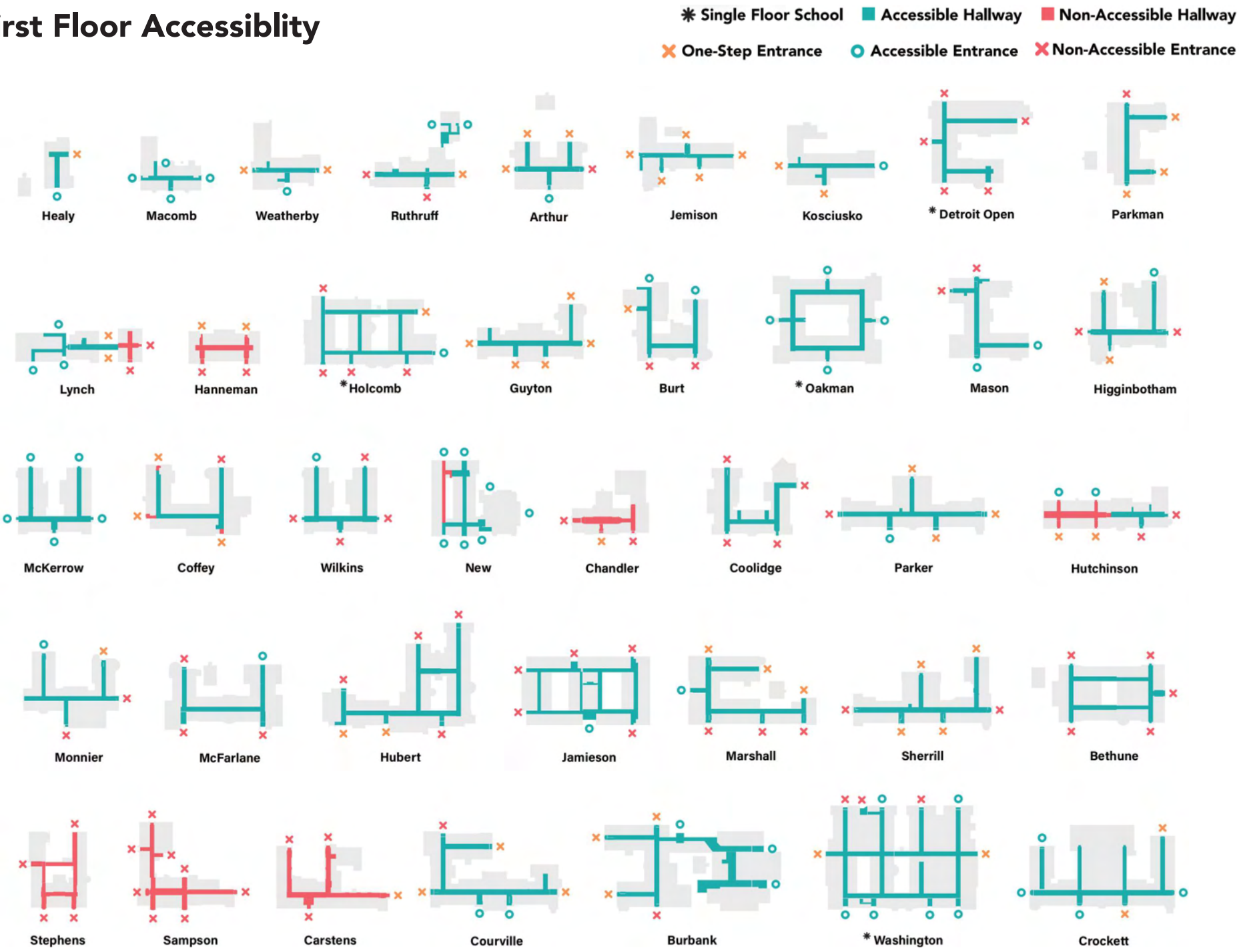
One of the primary challenges of rehabilitating any historic building is updating it to comply with ADA standards for accessibility. As all of the schools in this study were built long before the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Architectural Barriers act of 1968; in fact, many were built at a time when students with disabilities did not attend public school at all.

Multistory schools in this study do not have elevators. Many schools are comprised of multiple additions; in some cases, these different units were not constructed at the same grade or with corresponding floor heights, leading to level-changes within the building. The oldest school buildings were typically built on raised basements, which means that reaching the first floor from any entrance requires ascending a half flight of stairs. And finally, many buildings, even single-story at-grade construction, may have steps or barriers at entrances, preventing universal access.

All of these issues are fixable, though some are easier than others. The diagrams on the following page show the first floor corridors and entrances of each City-owned school in the study. Schools with corridors and entrances marked with O's have fully accessible entrances and ground floors (or near enough to become fully accessible with minor alterations). Schools with green corridors and entrances marked with X's are barrier-free inside and partially accesible, though entrances may need additional measures such as wheelchair ramps and handrails. Finally, schools all in red are raised-basement schools in which no part of the building is handicap accessible without major modifications. Schools marked with an asterisk (*) are single-story buildings that can be made 100% accessible. All others are multistory and require an elevator to reach upper levels.

Although there are several schools that are largely accessible or could easily be made accessible, there is only one school in this study that is fully accessible in its current state. Oakman Elementary is a particularly special building because it was built specifically for children with physical disabilities. Built in 1929, it was a pioneering building that was one of the first and most important special needs schools in Detroit.

First Floor Accessiblity



Large Spaces

Detroit's historic school buildings have many unique qualities that set them apart from other buildings in the city. One of the most important is the presence of large, high-ceilinged, column-free spaces in nearly every building—that is, school gyms and auditoriums. Not only do these spaces set historic school buildings apart from other building types, the design and arrangement of these spaces is unique in school to school.

The diagrams on the following page show the locations of gym and auditorium spaces within each building. The arrangement of these spaces is sometimes reflects a clear original design concept: for example, Oakman is anchored by four large spaces at its corners, Courville and Guyton have their large spaces paired in the center to create the focal point of a symmetrical elevation, and Parker and Sherrill pair the spaces in their own wing at the rear of the school to form a T-plan. Other times, the arrangement of gyms and auditoriums is more a reflection of site constraints or of the practice of constructing schools little-by-little, starting with classrooms and adding increasingly specialized spaces as the student body grew.

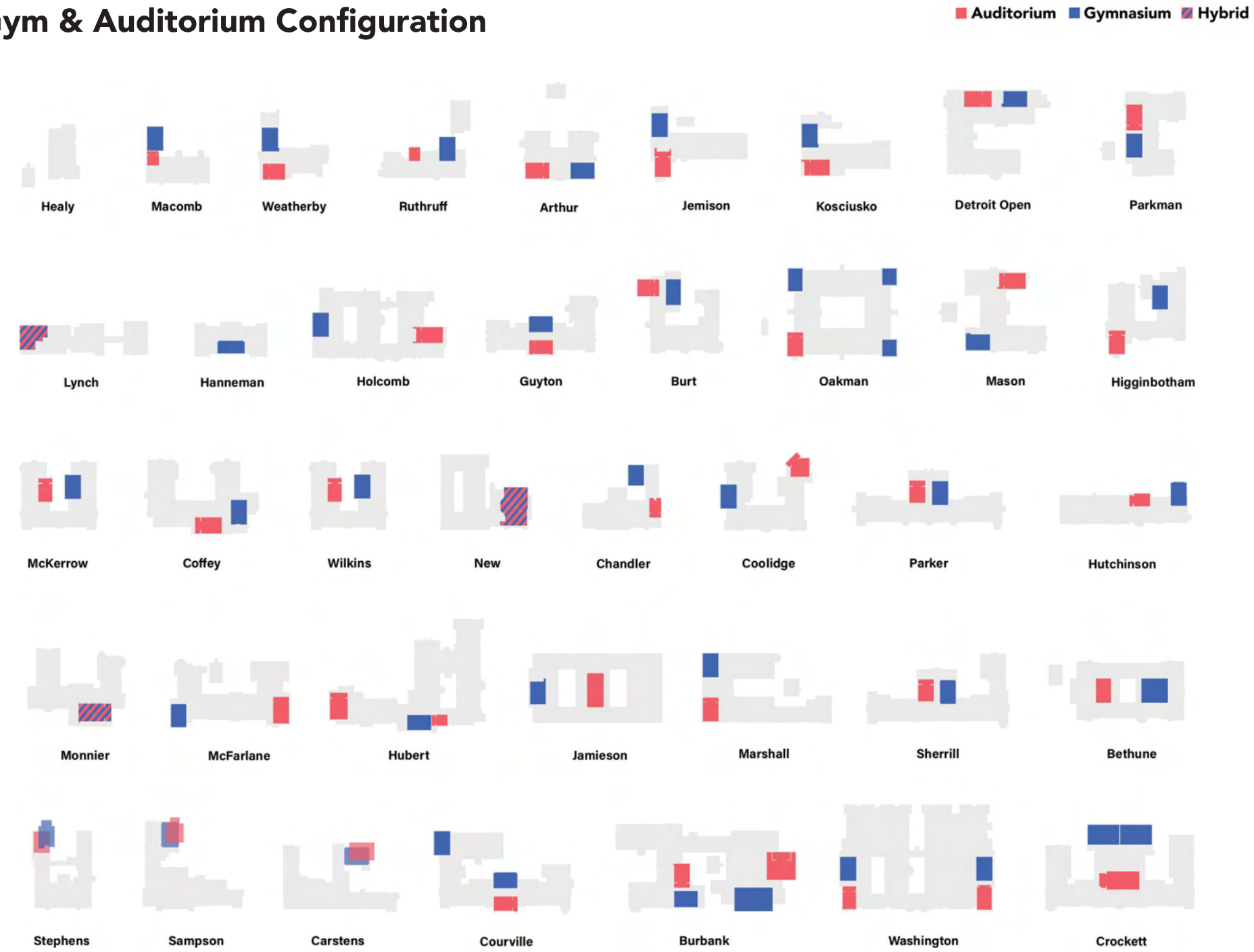
The arrangement of gyms and auditoriums has implications on the potential future uses of these schools as well—particularly if phased development, tactical preservation, or multiple groups of building use is part of the strategy. Some gyms and auditoriums were designed and positioned with public use in mind—they are located near street frontages or parking lots and have dedicated entrances that allow outside access to these spaces even while the rest of the school is closed to the public. Often, but not always, these more accessible gyms and auditoriums are clustered, so they can be accessed together, creating a special community zone within the building. Schools with these characteristics are well-suited towards hybrid uses, such as maintaining secure wings for private apartments, offices, and/or studios, while opening up the gym and auditorium to host public events.

Schools where gyms and auditoriums are located in different parts of the building, and especially those with gyms and auditoriums located in the center of the school may be slightly more difficult to divide into clear public and private sectors, though it is certainly possible with some creativity.

Beyond their location and arrangement within the school buildings, it is important to consider the unique design characteristics and reuse opportunities of each individual gym and auditorium on its own. While each space could of course be used for its original purpose (an auditorium becomes a community theater; a gym used for fitness classes), there are other opportunities for these versatile spaces. From taking advantage to their large, tall volumes (sculpture studios, manufacturing, drone flight training), to dividing them up (2-story lofts or stacked modules), there are many different paths available to creative developers.

The different design variations of gyms and auditoriums—as well as other school spaces like kindergartens and courtyards—are described in greater detail in the following pages.

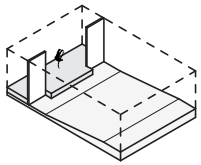
Gym & Auditorium Configuration



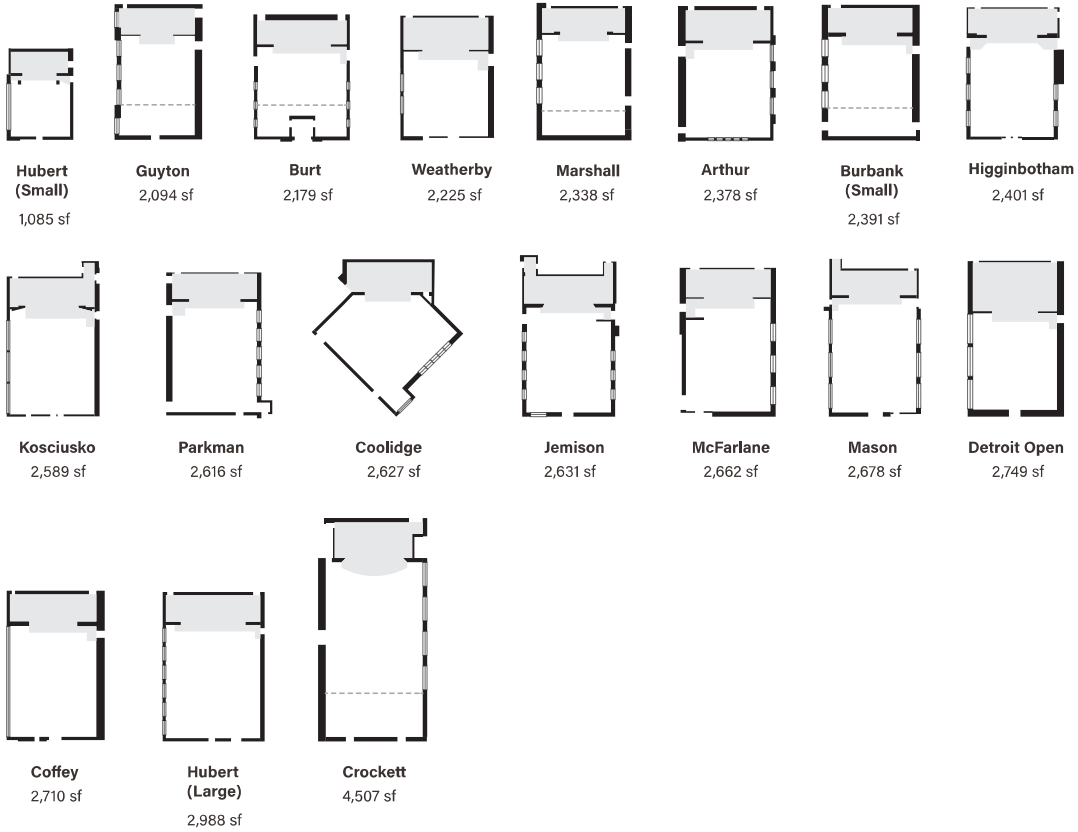
Auditoriums

Standard Auditorium

The most common type of auditorium found in historic schools has a roughly 40x60' floor area including the stage. They have 15-20' high ceilings, large windows, and a gently sloping (or "raked") floor. This type of auditorium can be found in many elementary schools built from the 1920s to 1950s, and although the decorations may be different from school to school, the basic elements are the same.

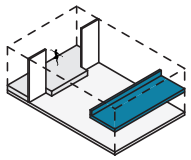


Raked Floor

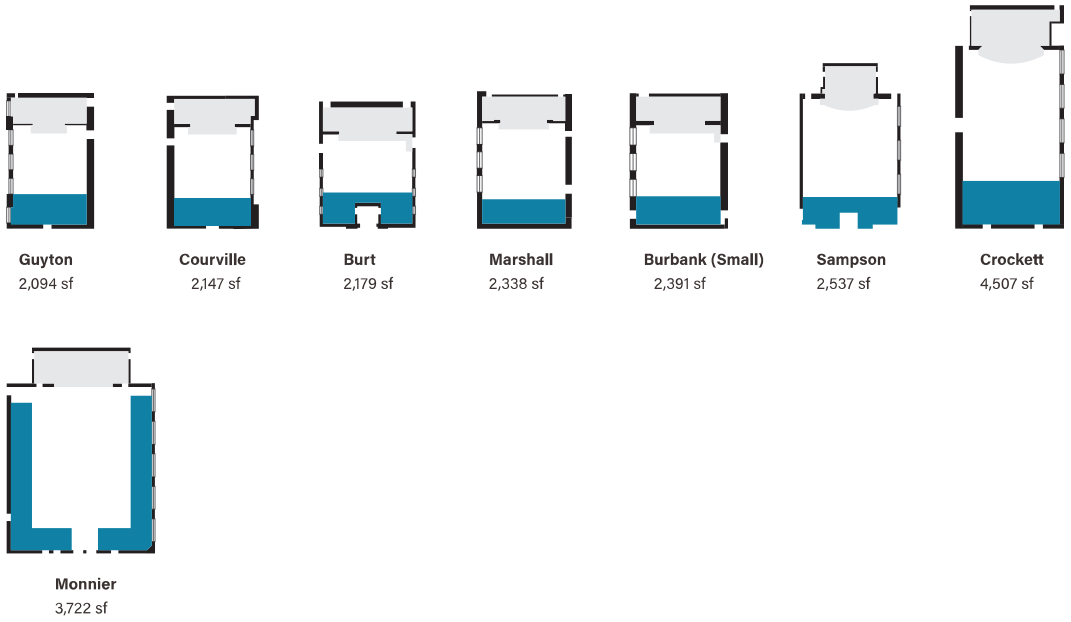


Balcony Auditorium

Some schools have an upper-level seating area, in the form of a balcony or mezzanine level. This feature allows more seating capacity within the same space. Other times, the balcony is used as a way to fit in other special spaces, such as entrance lobbies, coatrooms and ticketing, or projection rooms.

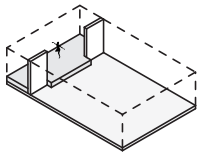


With Balcony

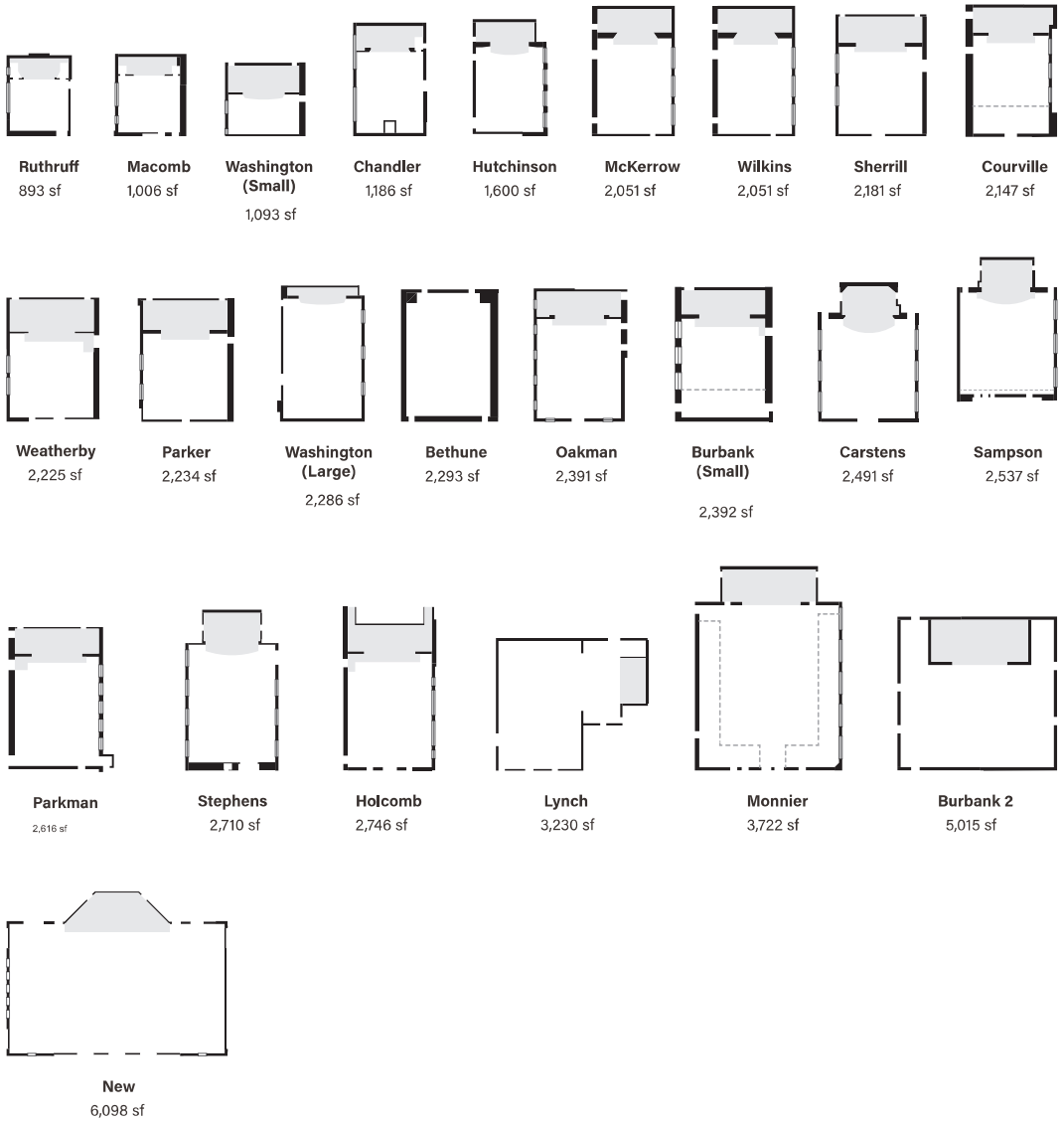


Flat-Floor Auditorium

While most auditoriums have sloped-floor seating areas (so the audience can see better), some auditoriums have flat floors. This makes the auditorium more accessible for people in wheelchairs or with limited mobility. Also, if the seats can be removed, the flat floor makes the auditorium easier to use for a wider variety of activities.



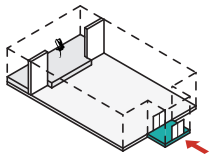
Flat Floor



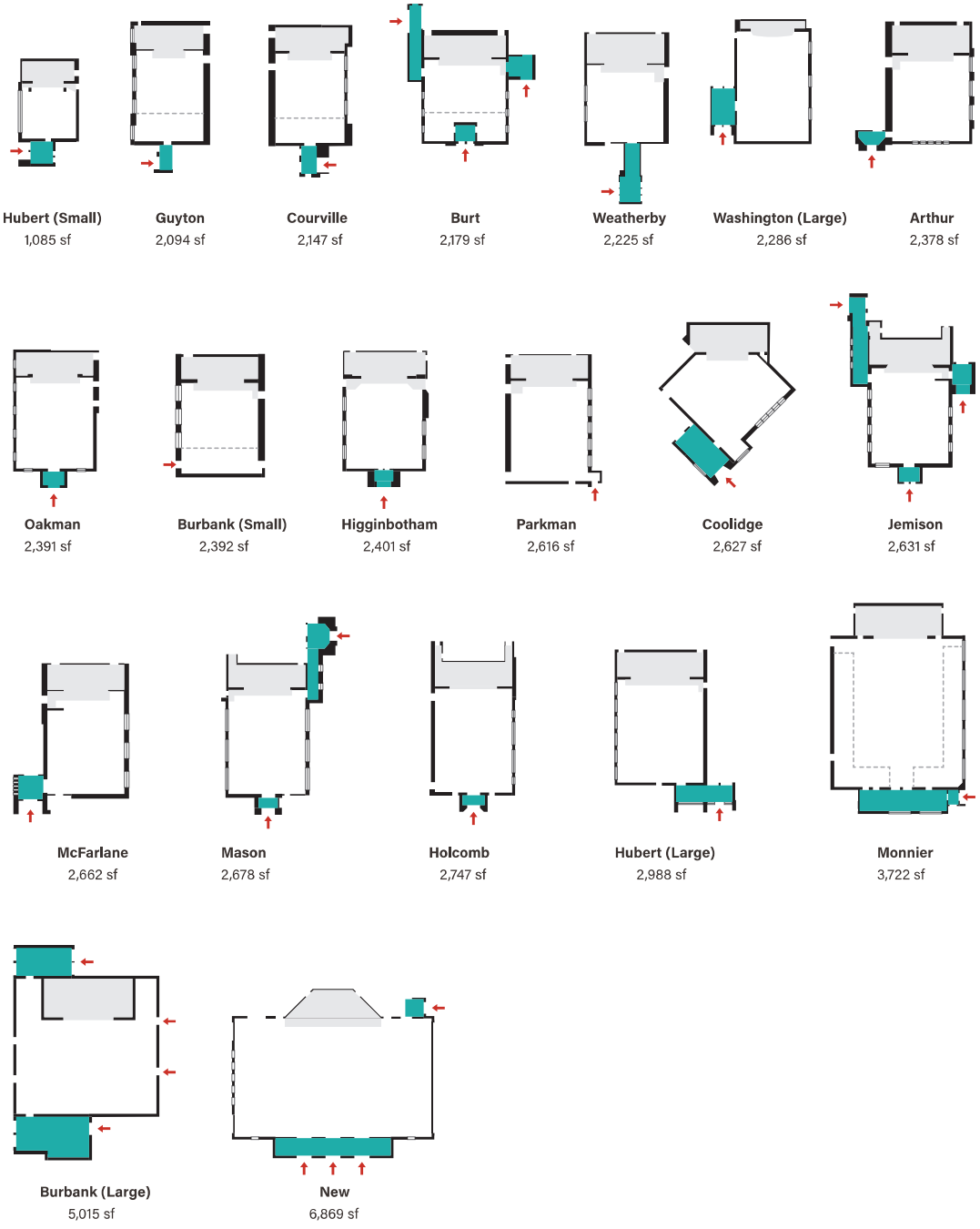
Auditorium Access

Many school auditoriums, particularly those built after the late-1920s, were designed to serve as community spaces when school was not in session. Some of these auditoriums offer direct access from the street via a dedicated entry vestibule, sometimes combined with a small cloakroom. Others are located near a main school entrance that can be gated off to allow public access to just the auditorium.

Vacant schools with auditoriums that can function semi-independently from the rest of the school building may offer more flexible approaches to rehabilitation, occupation, and operation.

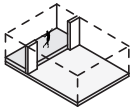


Direct Access

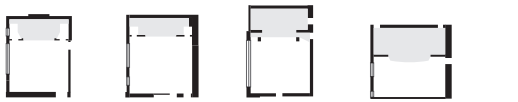


Mini Auditoriums

At Ruthruff and Macomb, the primary auditorium is only the size of a typical classroom. Hubert, Washington, and Sherrill are large schools that include both large and small auditoriums



Mini Auditorium



Ruthruff
893 sf

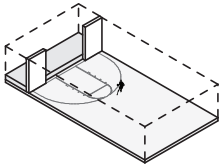
Macomb
1,006 sf

Hubert (Small)
1,085 sf

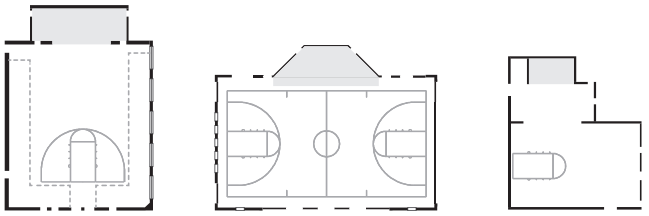
Washington (Small)
1,093 sf

Multipurpose Spaces

A few schools feature combination gym/auditoriums. The three examples at right show very different stage and seating area configurations.



Shared Auditorium & Gym



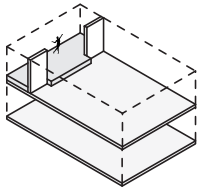
Monnier
3,722 sf

New
6,869 sf

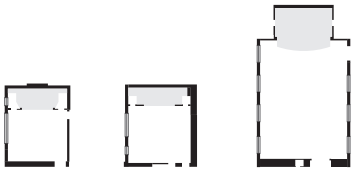
Lynch
3,230 sf

Second-Floor Auditorium

Most school auditoriums are located on the main level, where they can be easily accessed by both students and the public; this also helps accommodate their taller ceilings. Stephens is the only instance of a full-size auditorium located on an upper floor.



Second Floor



Ruthruff
893 sf

Macomb
1,006 sf

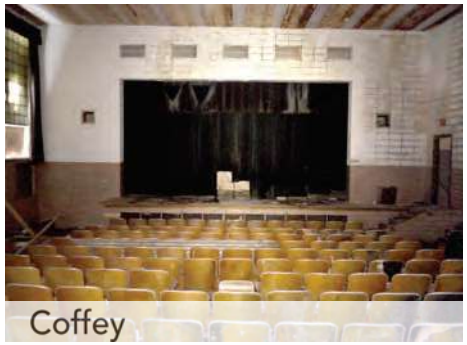
Stephens
2,710 sf


Burt


Detroit Open


Holcomb


Hubert


Coffey


Higginbotham


Burbank


Courville


Crockett


Marshall


Mason


New


Washington


Arthur


Carstens


Guyton


Hutchinson


Macomb


Wilkins


Chandler


Stephens


Ruthruff


Sampson


Sherrill


Coolidge


Jemison


Kosciusko


McFarlane


McKerrow


Monnier

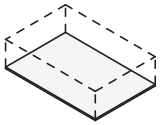

Oakman


Parker

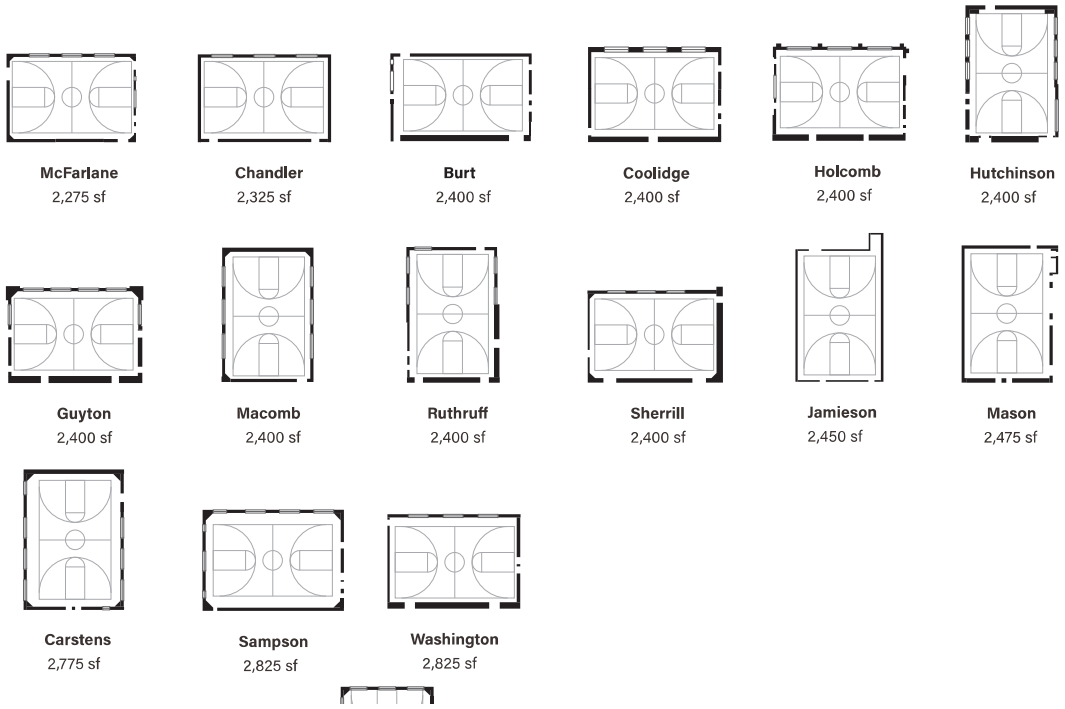
Gymnasiums

Standard Gym

The majority of schools included in this study were elementary schools, which commonly feature a 40x60' gym—large enough to accommodate one half-size basketball court. Design details vary: 1920s-era gyms are typically brick with large, often arched windows, while 1950s-era gyms are CMU construction, often with glass block clerestory windows.

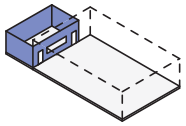


Standard Elementary (40x60')

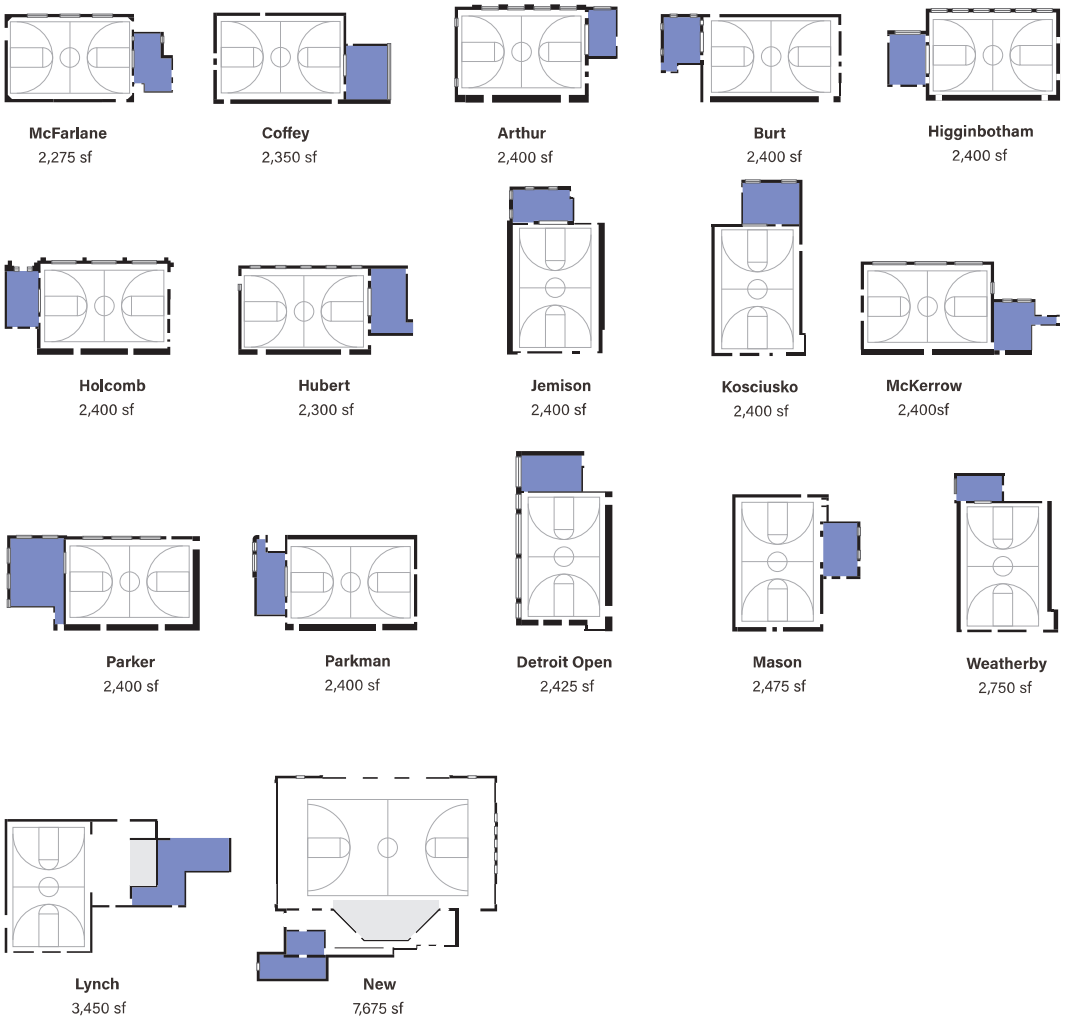


Gym/Cafeteria

Many of the gyms built from the 1940s on are combination gym/cafeterias: typically the standard 40x60' space with a small attached kitchen and a small serving window. Another common feature is a system of metal tables and benches that fold down from the gym walls. This change appears to coincide with the rise of government-supported school lunch programs during the 1930s and 40s, culminating with the 1946 National School Lunch Act.

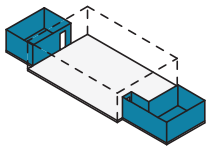


Shared Gym & Lunch Room

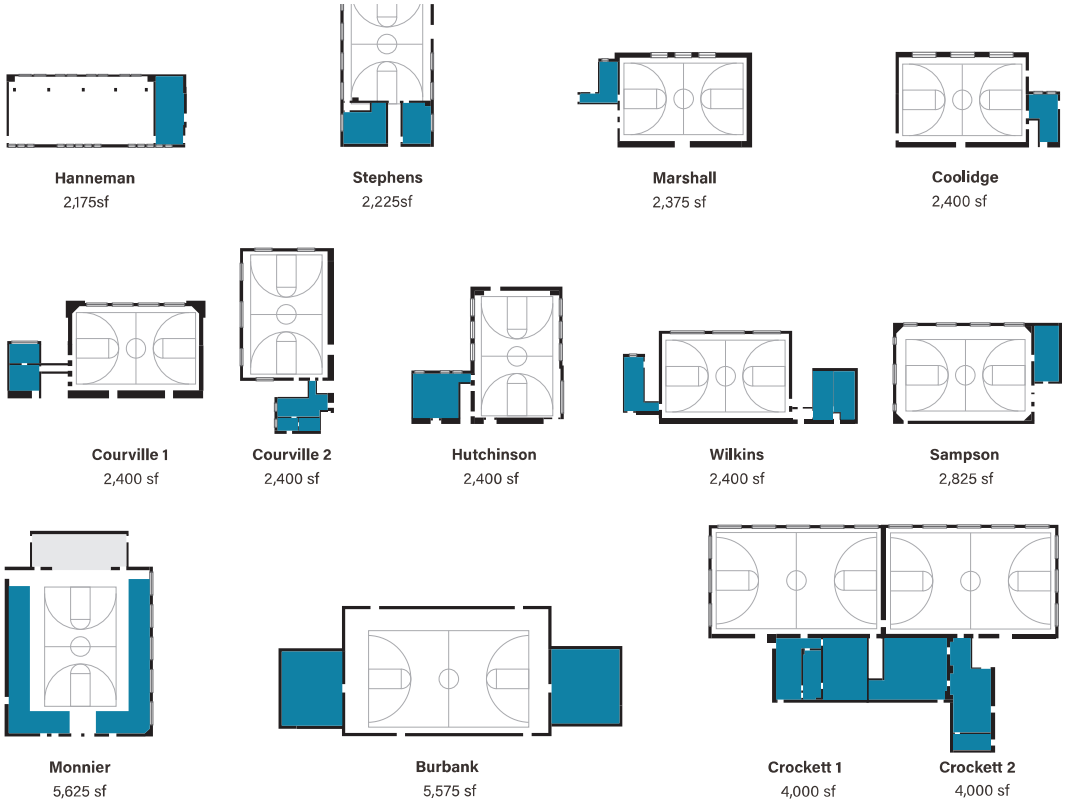


Locker Rooms

Locker rooms are a less common gym addition. Full-size gyms like those found at Crockett H.S. and Burbank feature large boys' and girls' locker rooms with showers and restrooms. Smaller schools often have just one small boys' locker room which may be little more than a space for changing and storage.



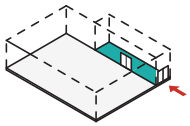
With Attached Locker Rooms



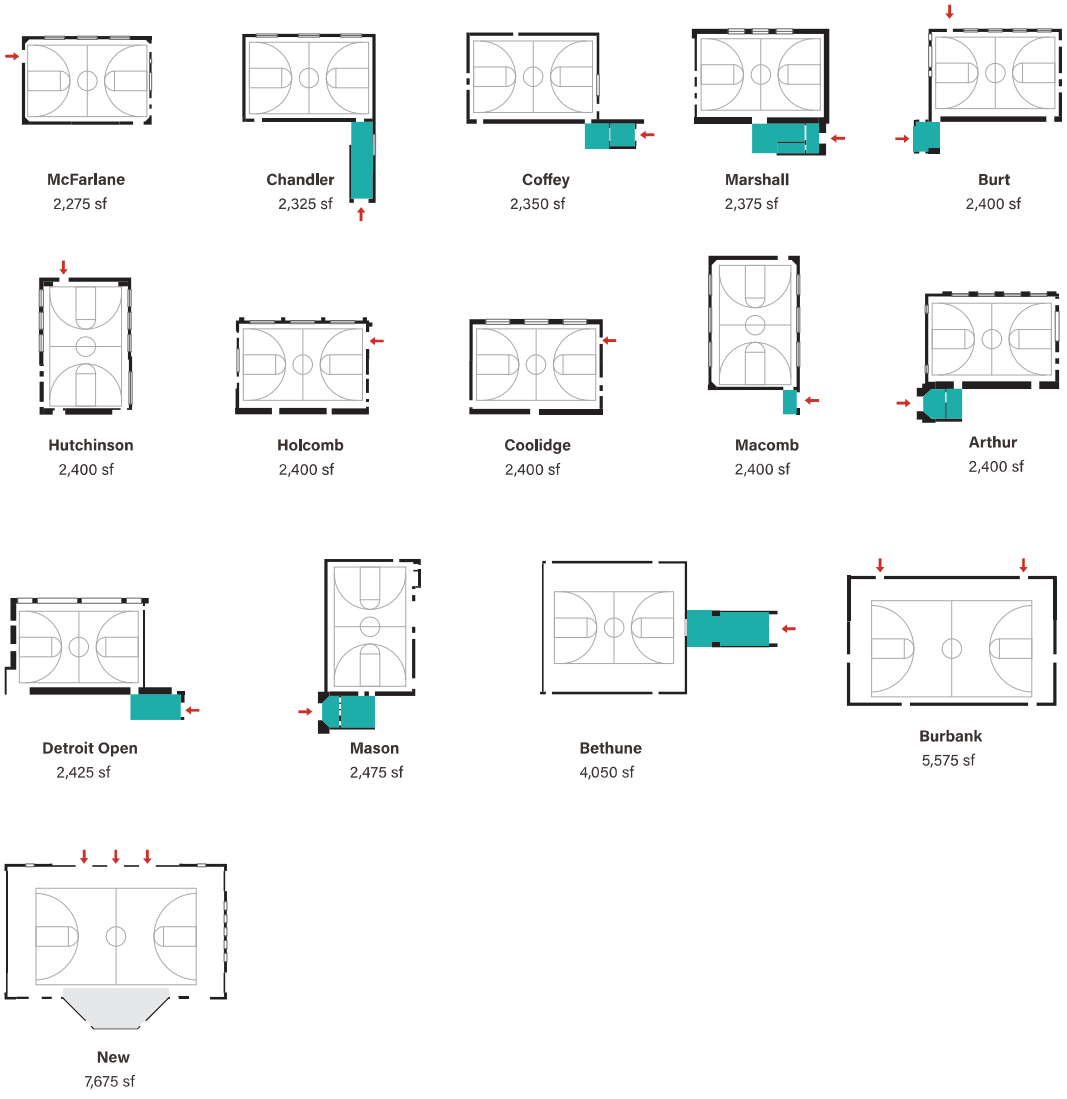
Gym Access

Many gyms feature dedicated exterior access, enabling them to be used by the public while the rest of the school is closed. While auditoriums may have a more formal entrance with a dedicated vestibule facing the street, gym entrances tend to be a nondescript door to the side or rear parking lot. Another approach was to locate the gym door inside, near a main school entrance that can be gated off to allow public access to just the auditorium.

Vacant schools with auditoriums that can function semi-independently from the rest of the school building may offer more flexible approaches to rehabilitation, occupation, and operation.

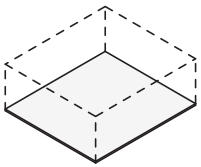


Direct Access

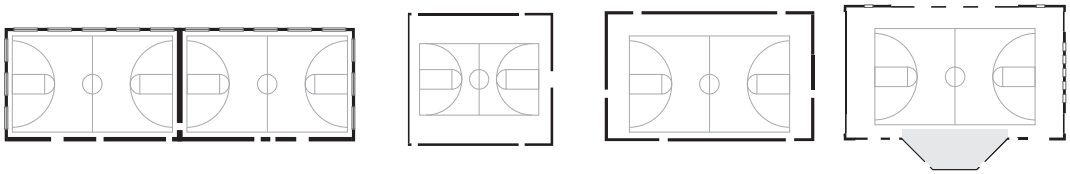


Full-Size Gyms

Gyms at Crockett, Burbank, and New schools are large enough to fit a full-size basketball court. Burbank and New both have pull-out bleachers, while Crockett has small mezannine area for spectators.



Large Gym



Crockett 1
4,000 sf

Crockett 2
4,000 sf

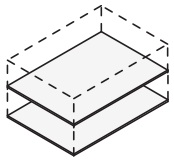
Bethune
4,050 sf

Burbank
5,575 sf

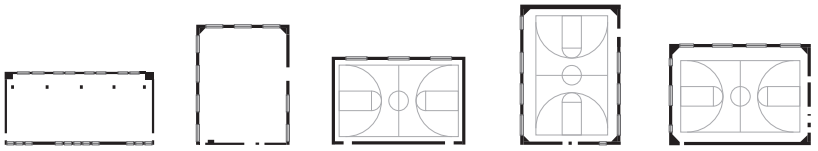
New
7675 sf

Basement Gyms

Gyms at Crockett, Burbank, and New schools are large enough to fit a full-size basketball court. Burbank and New both have pull-out bleachers, while Crockett has small mezannine area for spectators.



Lower Level Gym



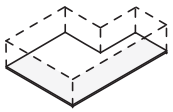
Hanneman
2,182 sf

Stephens
2,215 sf

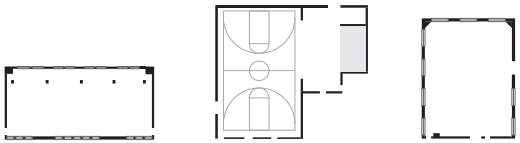
Chandler
2,313 sf

Carstens
2,774 sf

Sampson
2,832 sf



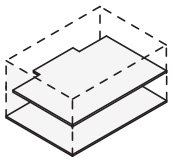
Irregular Gym Shape



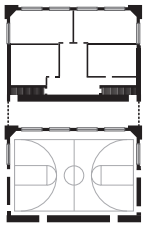
Hanneman
2,182 sf

Lynch
3,230 sf

Stephens
2,215 sf



Gym & Mezzanine



Guyton
2,391 sf

Detroit Open

Holcomb

Bethune

Coffey

Burbank

Courville

Crockett

New

Guyton

Wilkins

Jamieson

Sampson

McFarlane

Monnier

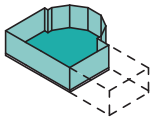
Oakman

Weatherby

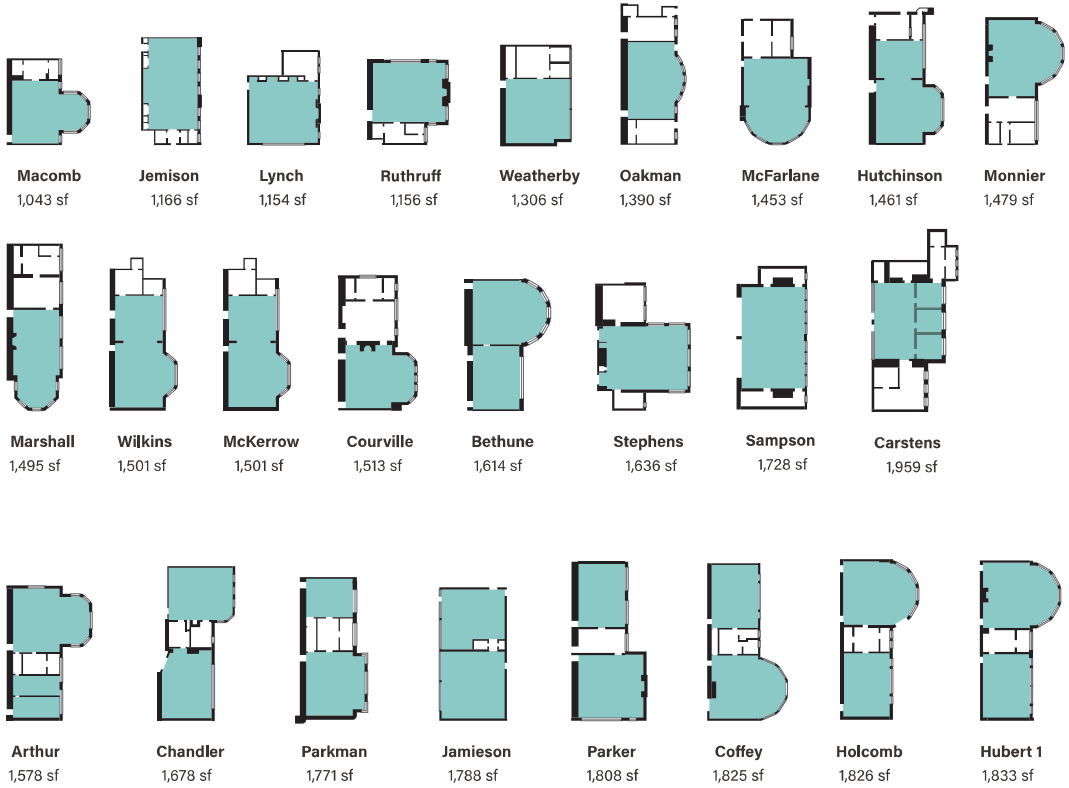
Kindergartens

1+ Room

One of the defining characteristics of Detroit's historic kindergartens is a main room with an attached auxiliary space. The extra space typically includes a boys and girls toilet, coat room, and storage closet.

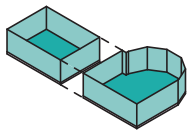


1+ Rooms

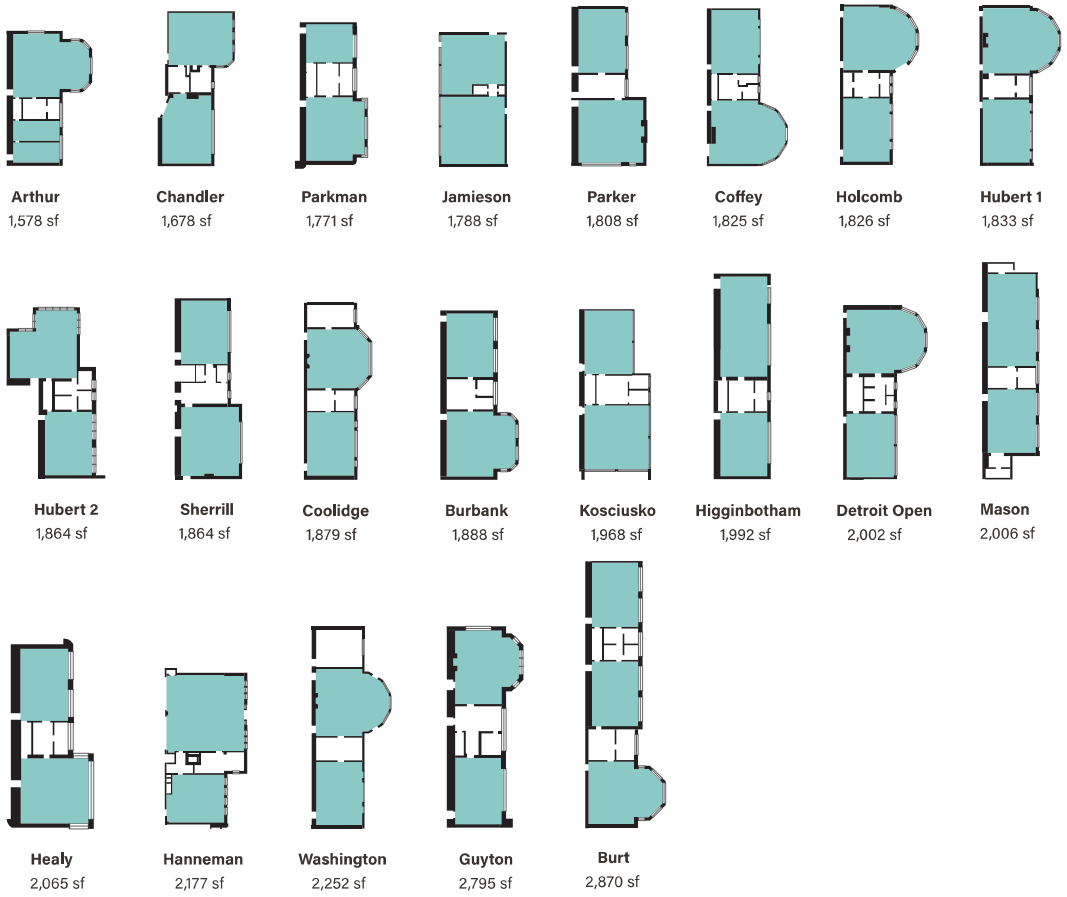


2+ Room

The most common kindergarten arrangement observed in the schools in this study is two main rooms connected by an auxiliary space. Like the 1+ arrangement, the extra space includes toilets, coat room, and storage closet.

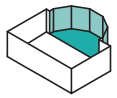


2+ Rooms

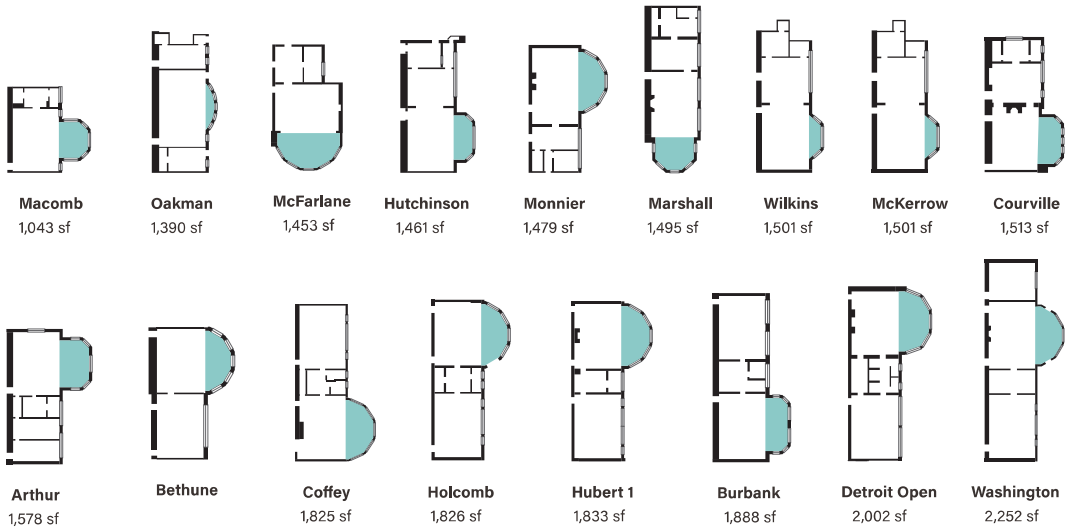


Round Bay Window

The most noticeable feature of most historic kindergartens is the bay window. Shapes and sizes range from large half-circles that are as wide as the room itself, to shallow bump-outs. The bay typically includes a wooden bench beneath the windows, with radiators in the back, and sometimes toy storage under the seat.

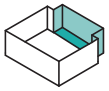


Round Bay Window

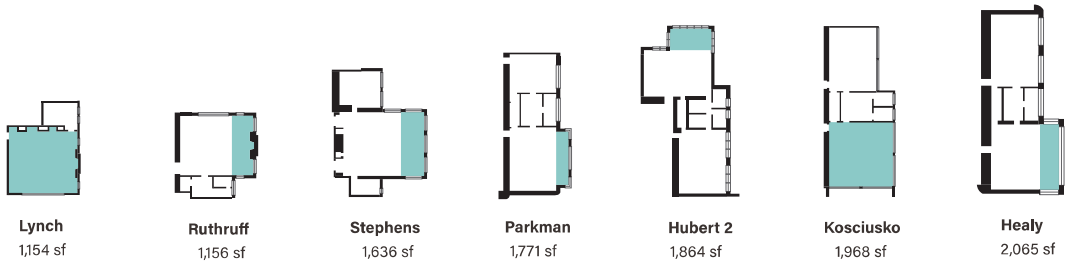


Multiple Windows

Kindergartens built before 1920 and after 1950 typically do not have round bay windows. Instead, these schools often have windows on at least two walls, ensuring ample sunlight.

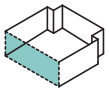


Windows on Multiple Elevations

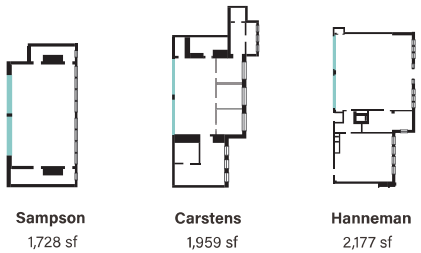


Operable Wall

Kindergartens built before 1920 are often large rectangular rooms with an operable wall that allows the space to be opened to the main hallway.



Operable Wall to Hallway




Detroit Open


Healy


Holcomb


Bethune


Coffey


Lynch


Marshall


Washington


Guyton


Macomb


Hanneman


Sampson


McFarlane


Oakman

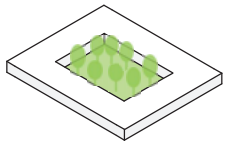

Parker


Weatherby

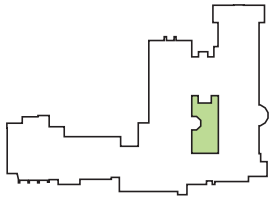
Courtyards

Enclosed Green Space

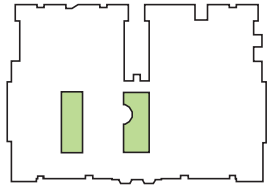
Five schools in this study feature one or more accessible green courtyards that are completely enclosed. Washington, Oakman, and Jamieson had these spaces from the start, while Hubert and Holcomb formed them as a result of multiple additions. In the older schools, a kindergarten or library bay window extends into the green space.



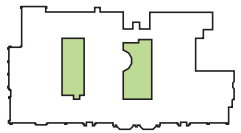
Interior Green



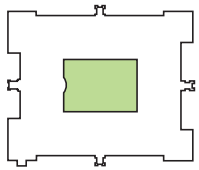
Hubert
3,062 sf



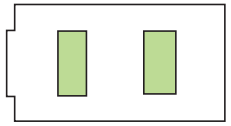
Washington
6,216 sf



Holcomb
6,406 sf



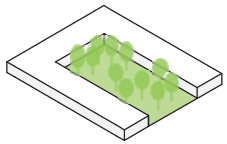
Oakman
8,705 sf



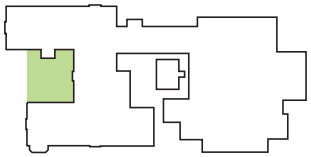
Jamieson
8,794 sf

Semi-Enclosed Green Space

Several schools have green space that is surrounded by wings of the school on three sides. At Burbank, Mason, and Parkman, the courtyard is positioned at the front of the school, creating a public-facing garden flanked by two main entrances. At Carstens, Open, and Coffey, the space is located at the rear and is an extension of the schoolyard. At the other four schools, this area is green, but not an accessible space.

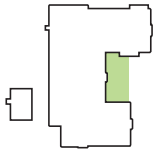


Open Green



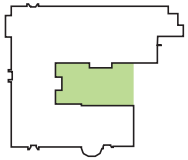
Burbank
5,356 sf

Mason
4,223 sf

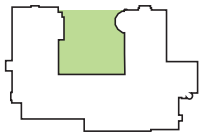


Mason
4,223 sf

Carstens
7,011 sf

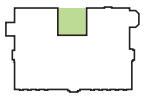


Detroit Open
7,075 sf



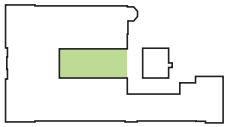
Coffey
9,082 sf

Chandler
1,624 sf



Arthur
1,773 sf

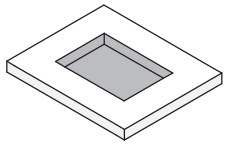
Courville
4,363 sf



Marshall
4,537 sf

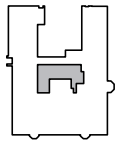
Enclosed Hardscape

Not all enclosed courtyards are green. New and Bethune feature enclosed, accessible paved areas. At Stephens, there is a central lightwell that is not accessible at all.

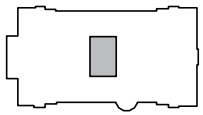


Interior Paved

New
1,847 sf



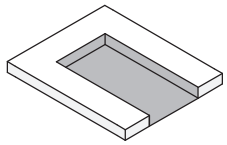
Stephens
2,056 sf



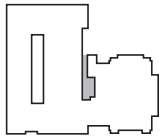
Bethune
2,370 sf

Semi-Enclosed Hardscape

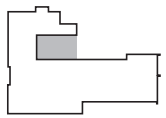
The most common type of courtyard is a partially-enclosed paved area. Typically, these areas are purely utilitarian spaces used for parking and deliveries. Often, these spaces are actually the concrete roof of a basement boiler room—this is where coal was delivered and ash hauled away. The other function of these semi-enclosed spaces was to provide light and ventilation to interior classrooms. They are usually not aesthetically pleasing, but could be repurposed in the future.



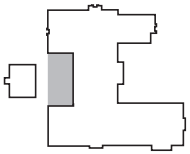
Open Paved



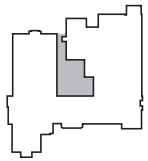
New
890 sf



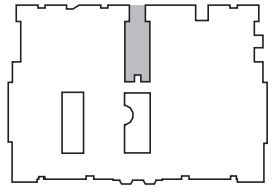
Kosciusko
2,246 sf



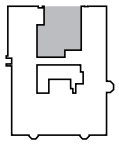
Mason
3,042 sf



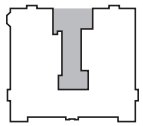
Higginbotham
3,152 sf



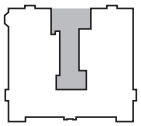
Washington
3,940 sf



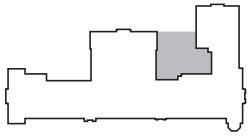
Stephens
4,596 sf



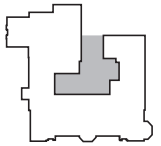
McKerrow
5,064 sf



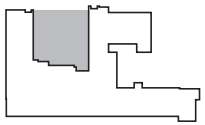
Wilkins
5,064 sf



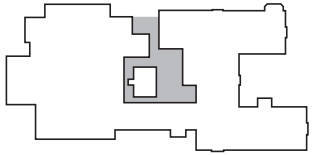
Sherrill
5,011 sf



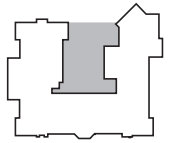
Burt
5,250 sf



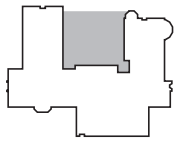
Carstens
7,011 sf



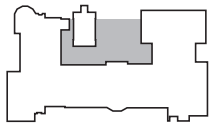
Burbank
7,079 sf



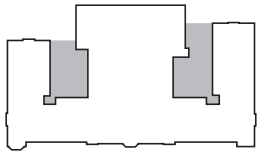
Coolidge
7,803 sf



Monnier
7,990 sf



McFarlane
7,990 sf



Crockett
10,790 sf

District 1 Overview

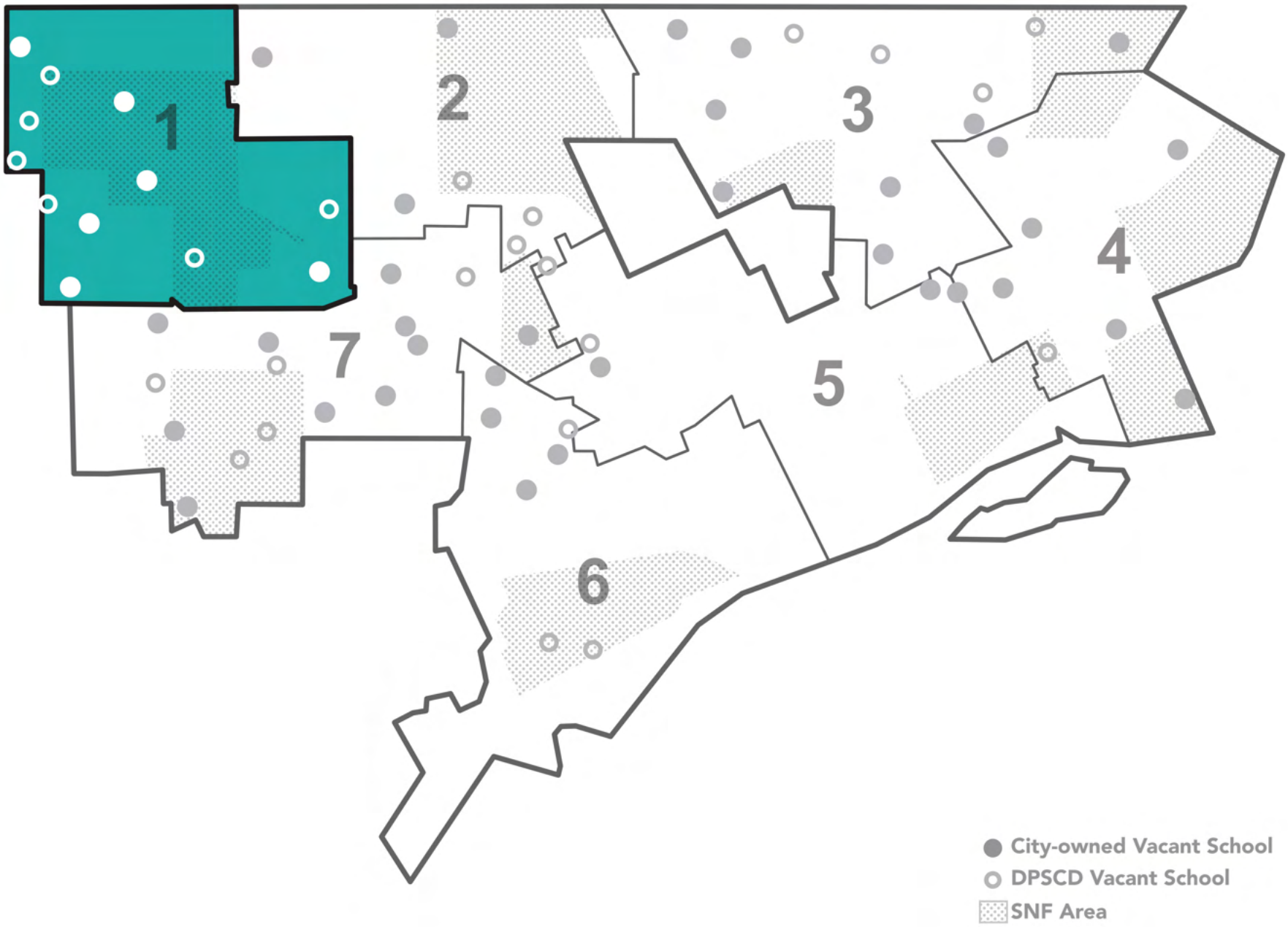
City of Detroit Schools:

Burt
Detroit Open
Healy
Holcomb
Hubert

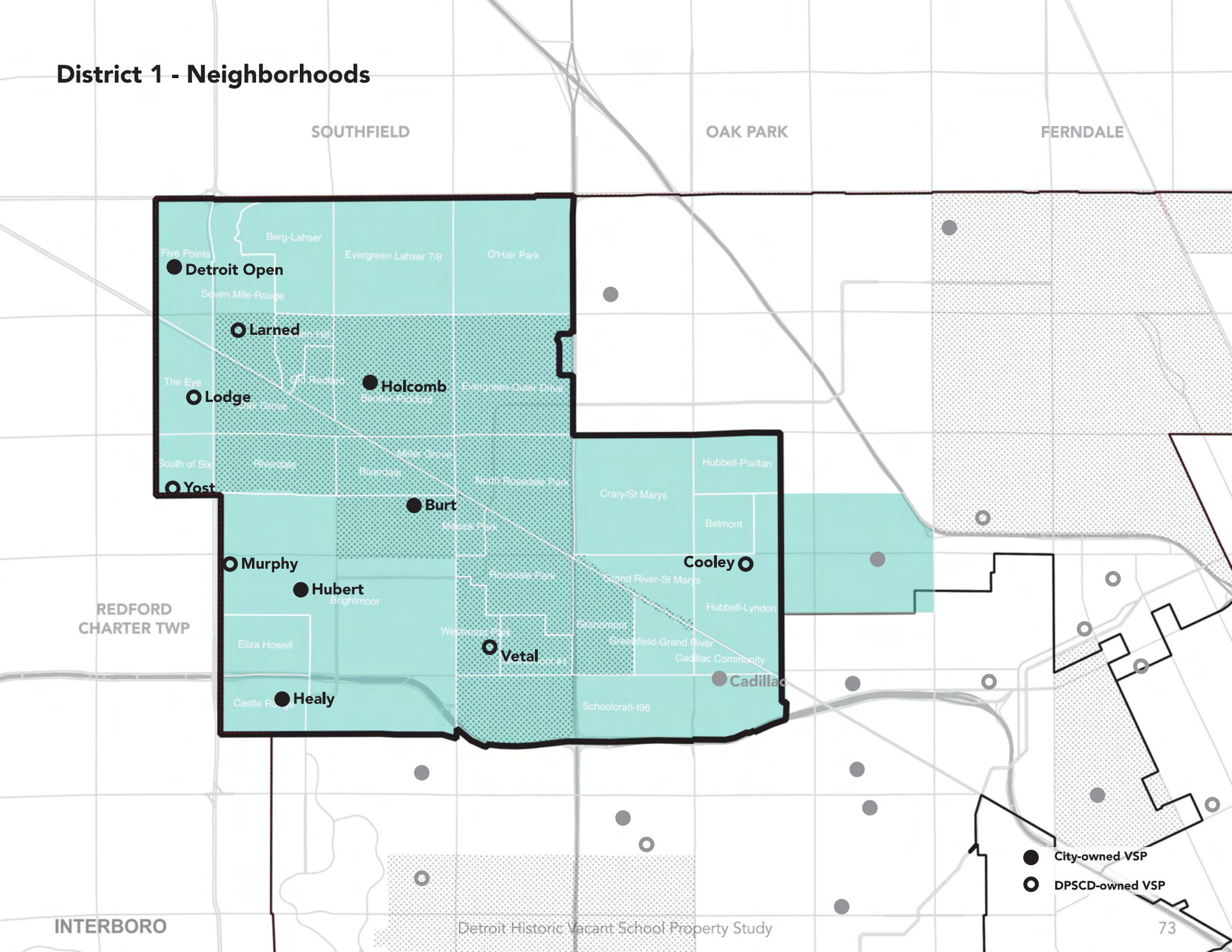
DPSCD Schools:

Cooley
Larned
Lodge
Murphy
Vetal
Yost

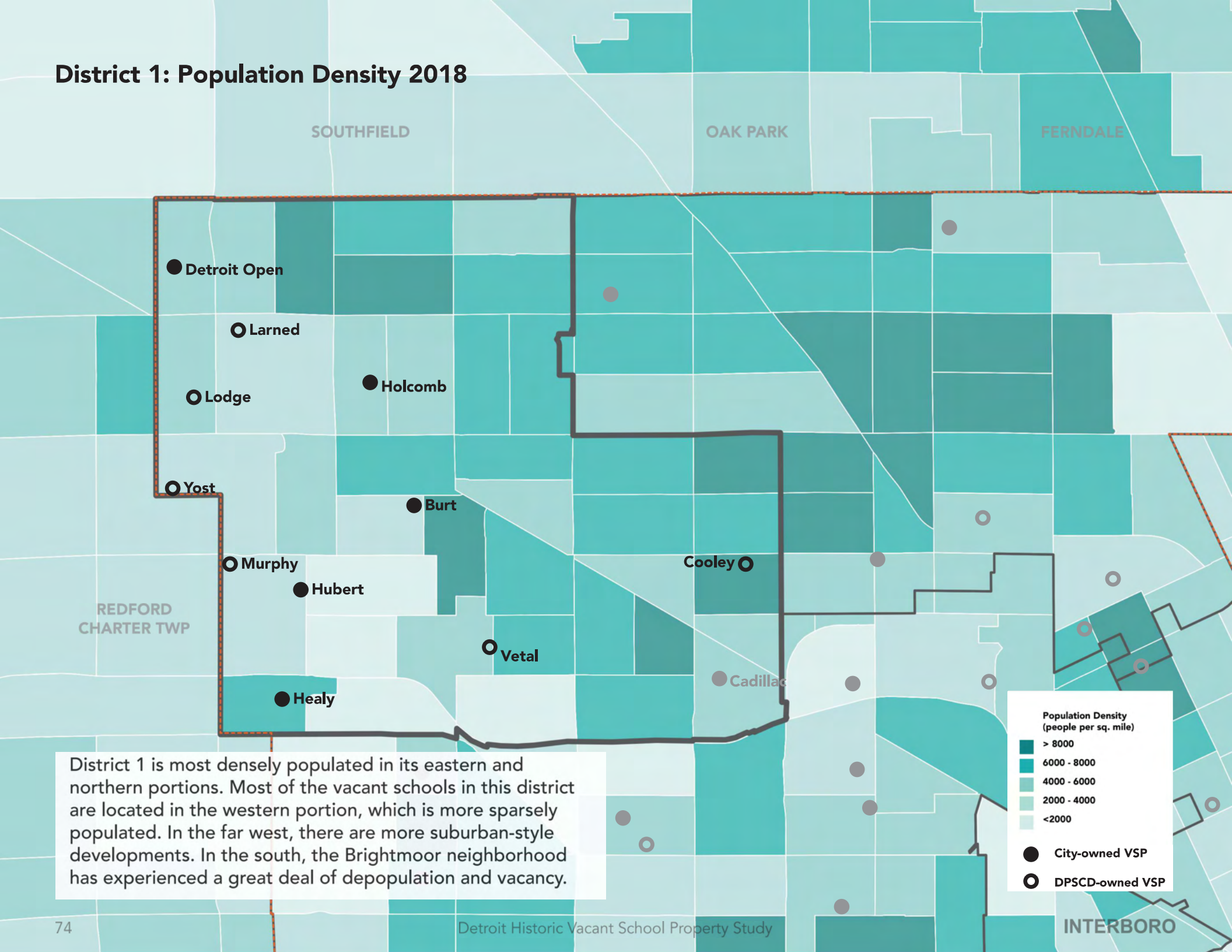
District 1


1
2
3
4
5
6
7
City-owned Vacant School
DPSCD Vacant School
SNF Area

District 1 - Neighborhoods

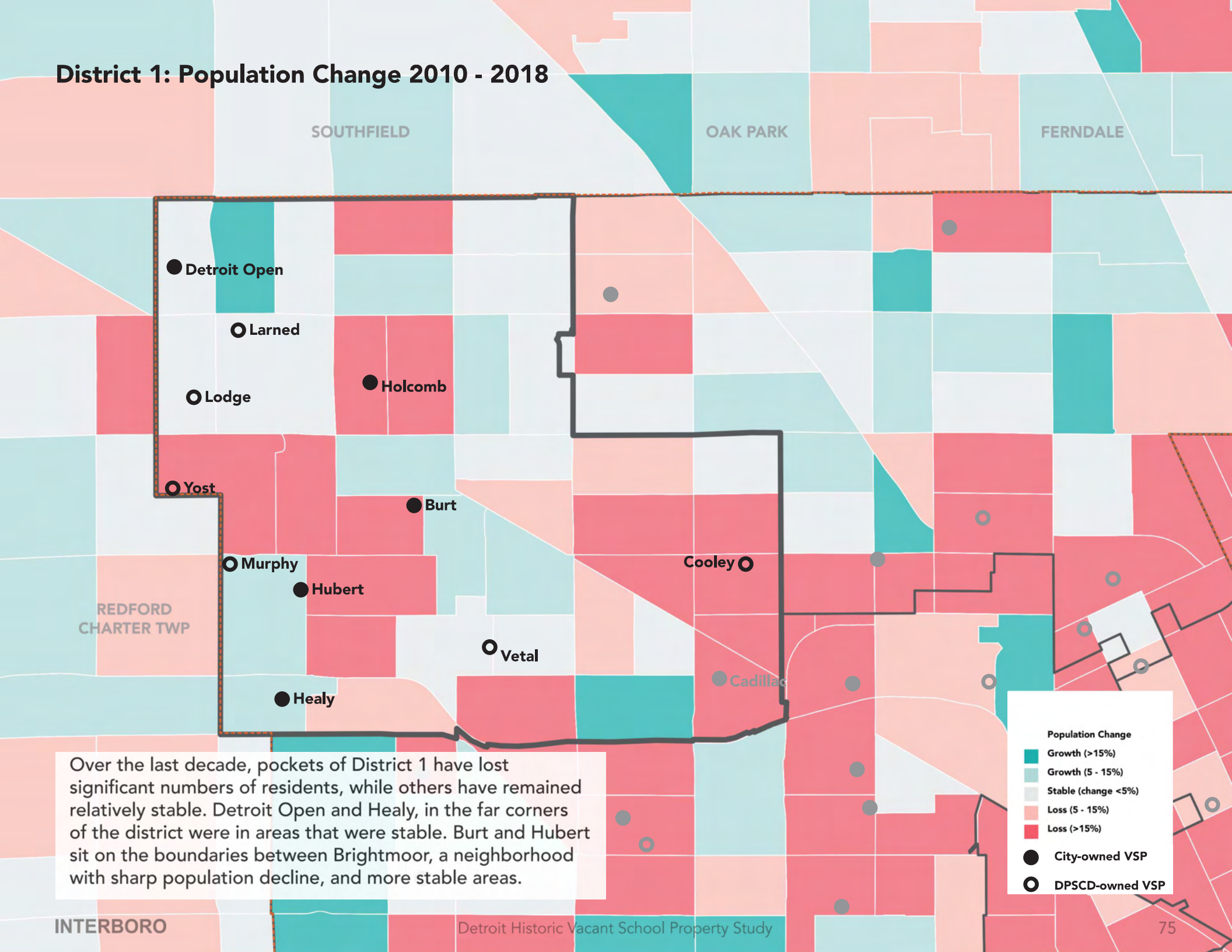


District 1: Population Density 2018



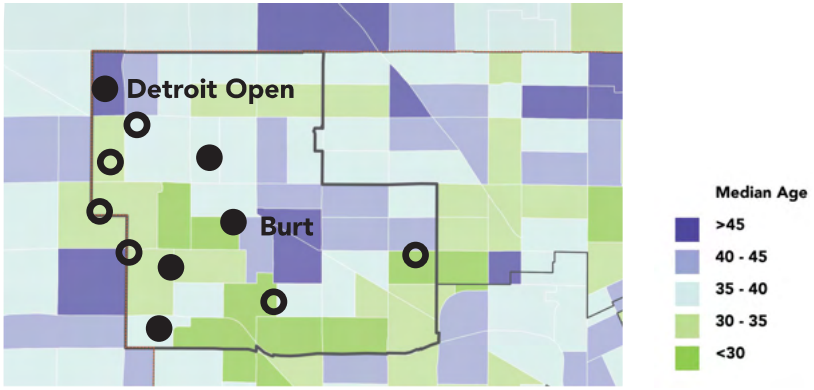
District 1 is most densely populated in its eastern and northern portions. Most of the vacant schools in this district are located in the western portion, which is more sparsely populated. In the far west, there are more suburban-style developments. In the south, the Brightmoor neighborhood has experienced a great deal of depopulation and vacancy.

District 1: Population Change 2010 - 2018



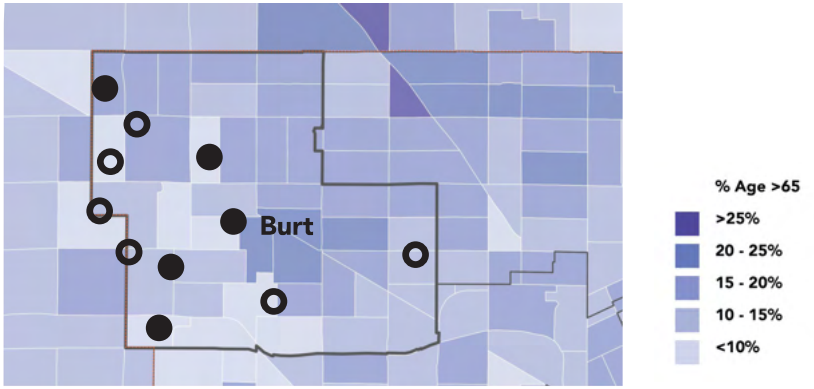
Over the last decade, pockets of District 1 have lost significant numbers of residents, while others have remained relatively stable. Detroit Open and Healy, in the far corners of the district were in areas that were stable. Burt and Hubert sit on the boundaries between Brightmoor, a neighborhood with sharp population decline, and more stable areas.

District 1: Age



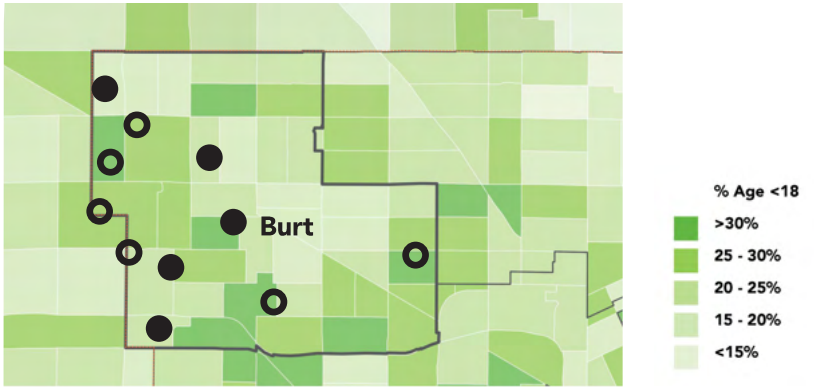
Median Age - 2018

District 1 residents tend to be older in the northern and middle part of the district, and younger in the south. Detroit Open is in one of the oldest census tracts in the city, with a median age over 45. Burt is in one of the youngest tracts, with a median age below 30.



Population Age 65 and Older - 2018

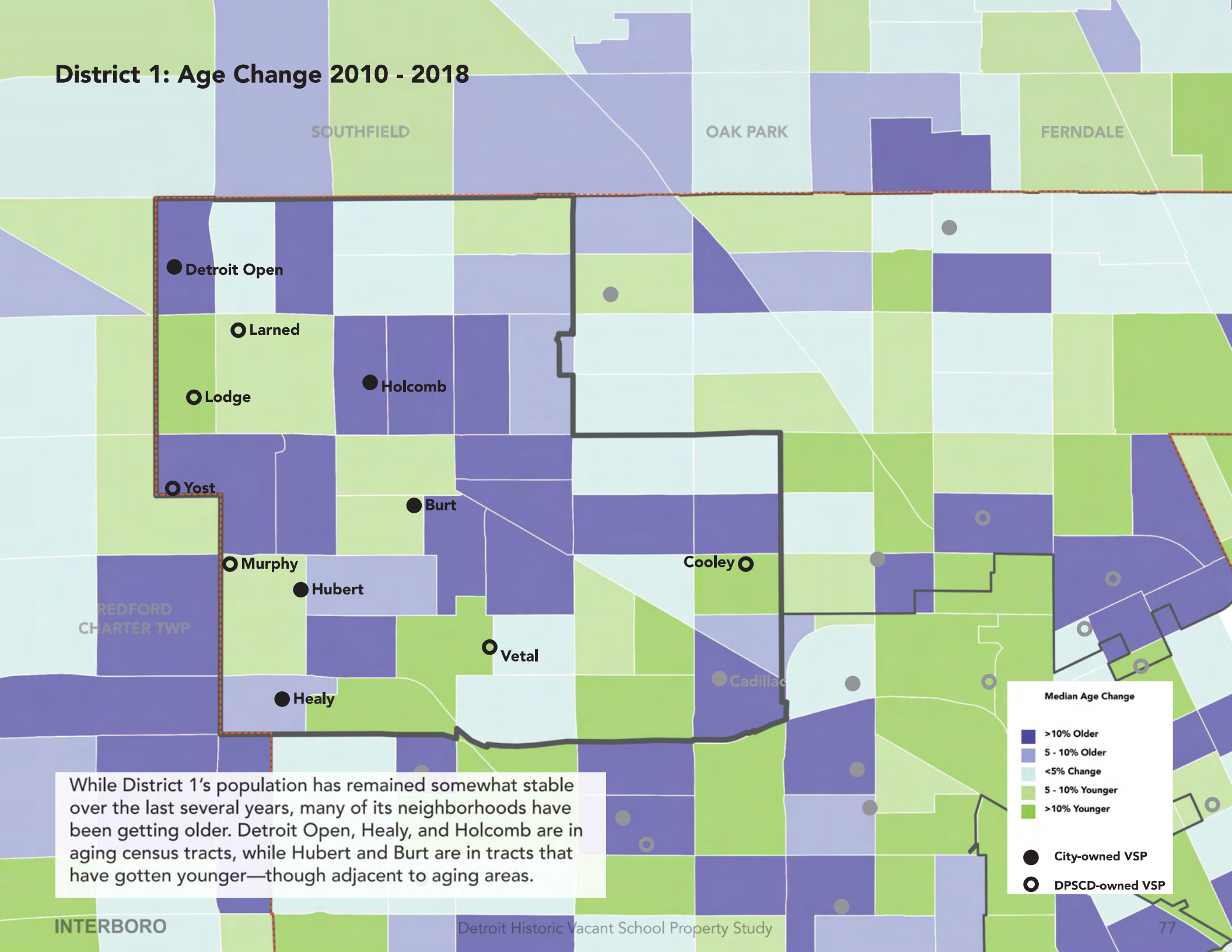
Burt, Healy, and Holcomb are located in tracts with low numbers of senior residents. However, Burt is located on the edge of an area where more than 1 in every 5 residents is over 65.



Population Age 18 and Younger - 2018

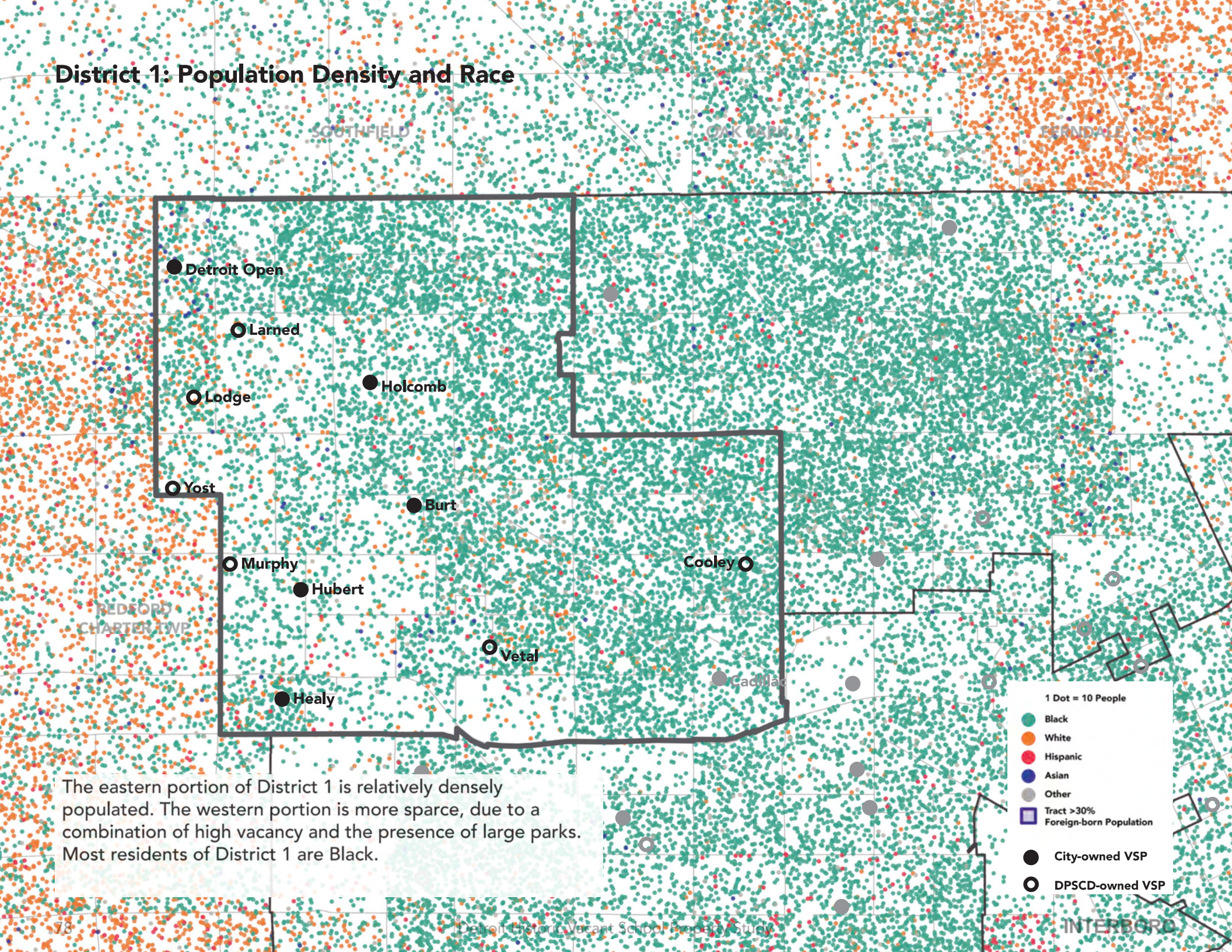
Youth are concentrated toward the edges of the district, with an area in the center with relatively few children. Burt is located just on the edge of this youth band, in a tract where more than 30% of residents are under age 18.

District 1: Age Change 2010 - 2018



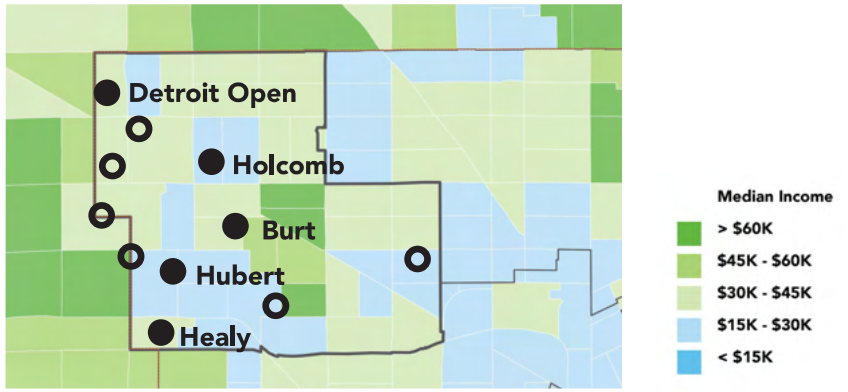
While District 1's population has remained somewhat stable over the last several years, many of its neighborhoods have been getting older. Detroit Open, Healy, and Holcomb are in aging census tracts, while Hubert and Burt are in tracts that have gotten younger—though adjacent to aging areas.

District 1: Population Density and Race



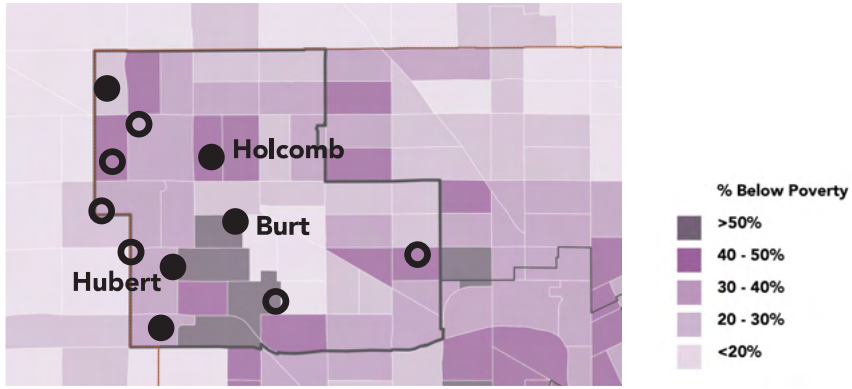
The eastern portion of District 1 is relatively densely populated. The western portion is more sparce, due to a combination of high vacancy and the presence of large parks. Most residents of District 1 are Black.

District 1: Income and Wealth



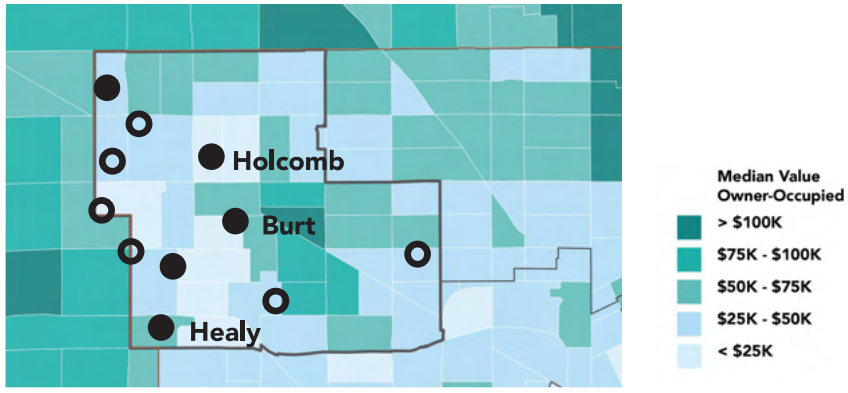
Median Household Income (2018)

The majority of tracts in District 1 are either at or just below the citwide median household income (about $31,000). The Rosedale Park neighborhood, in the center of the district just east of Burt Elementary, has much higher median incomes than the rest of the district and city.



% Population Below Poverty Line (2018)

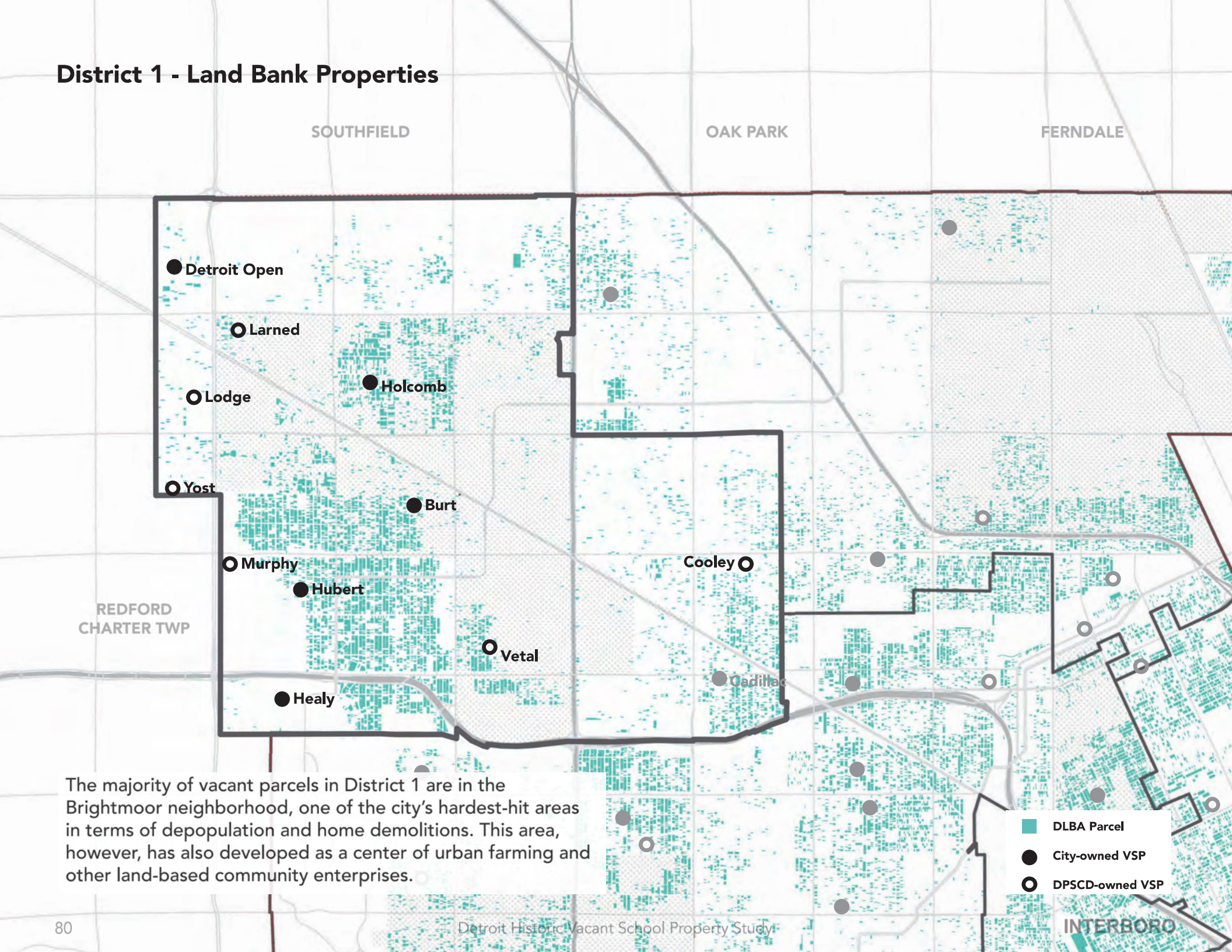
The Brightmoor neighborhood in the southern portion of District 1 has a high concentration of residents living below the poverty line; neighboring Rosedale Park and Grandmont, however, have poverty rates well below the city median. Burt Elementary sits on the edge of these two neighborhoods.



Median Value, Owner Occupied Units (2018)

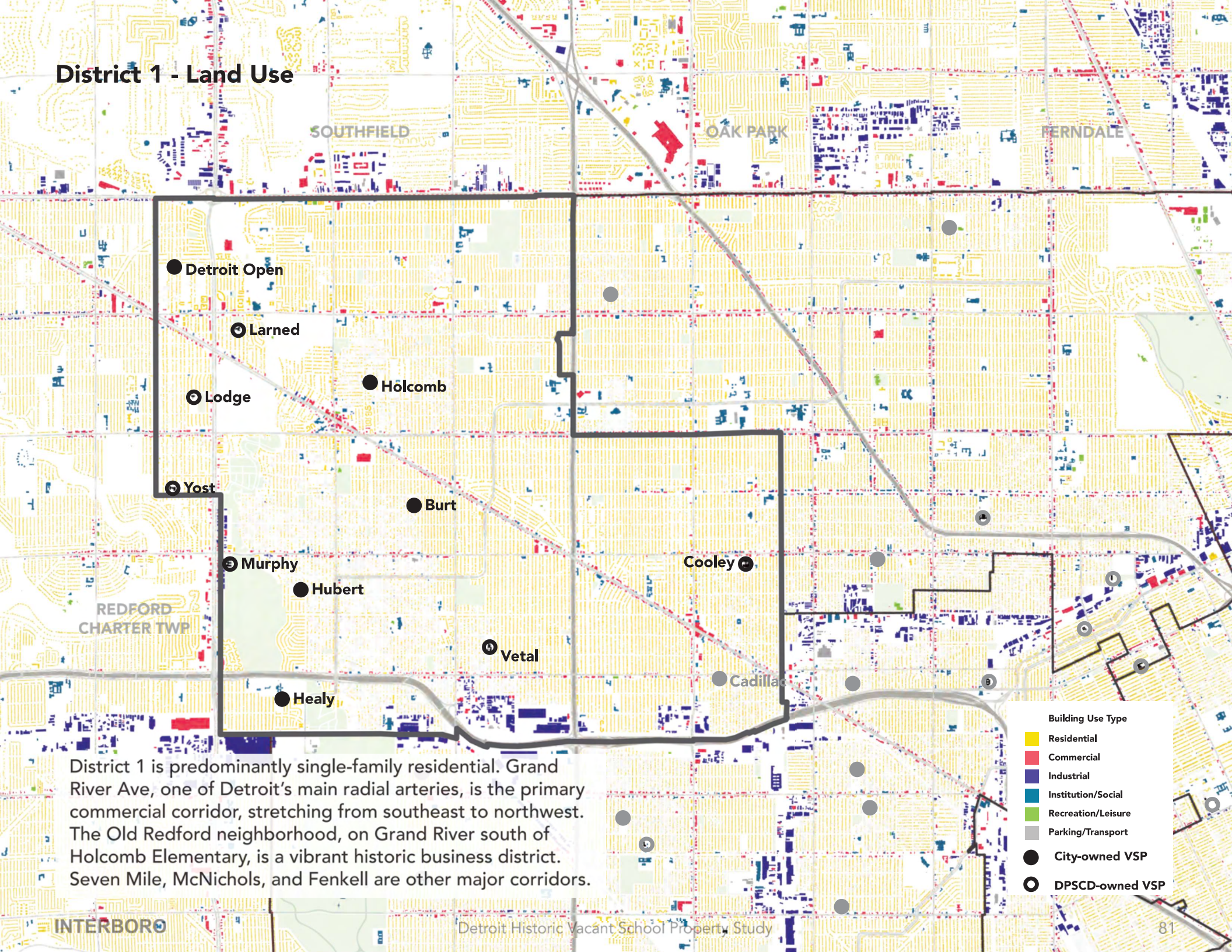
Vacant schools in District 1 are mostly in neighborhoods with home values below the city median. The exceptions are Burt, on the edge of the more expensive Rosedale Park neighborhood, and Healy, which sits in the Castle Rouge enclave west of Rouge Park.

District 1 - Land Bank Properties



The majority of vacant parcels in District 1 are in the Brightmoor neighborhood, one of the city's hardest-hit areas in terms of depopulation and home demolitions. This area, however, has also developed as a center of urban farming and other land-based community enterprises.

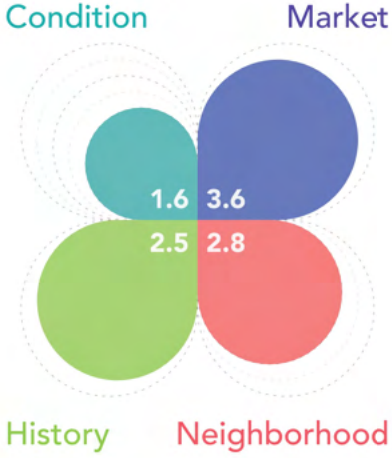
District 1 - Land Use



District 1 is predominantly single-family residential. Grand River Ave, one of Detroit's main radial arteries, is the primary commercial corridor, stretching from southeast to northwest. The Old Redford neighborhood, on Grand River south of Holcomb Elementary, is a vibrant historic business district. Seven Mile, McNichols, and Fenkell are other major corridors.

1 Burt

Address: 20710 Pilgrim
Parcel: 22104487
District: 1
SNF Area: Northwest/Grand River
Owner: City of Detroit
Site Area: 3.43 ac
Gross Floor Area: 46,200 sf
Floors: 2
Plan Type: U
School Type: Elementary
Year Built: 1925, 1959
Zoned: R1
Base Rehab Cost (est): $2.0M
Total Rehab Cost (est): $12.1M



Building Overview

2-story double-loaded U-plan. Original south unit built in 1925. Northeast and northwest wings were added in 1959.

Original front facade is gothic revival style with brown brick, decorative stonework, wood frame windows, and a large 2-story bay window in the center. Finishes are plaster

1959 additions are modern style. Windows are glass block ribbons over bays of three operable steel windows. Construction is concrete frame with CMU.

Gym and auditorium located in 1950s northwest wing, and are simple concrete frame and block construction.

Auditorium features three exterior access points with vestibules, including one dedicated auditorium entrance at the rear. There is a small balcony and projection room accessible from inside the auditorium.

Gym has direct exterior access and is connected to a kitchen and several offices and storage areas.

Lockers, plumbing, and windows are scrapped.

Neighborhood Overview

In Northwest/Grand River SNF area. Located in Brightmoor neighborhood, near Miller Grove and Rosedale Park neighborhoods.

Located two blocks south of Grand River Ave., a major commercial corridor and transit artery.

Less than one mile from Meijer grocery store and supercenter.

Approximately one mile from Old Redford area at Grand River and Lahser. The area includes the Redford Theater, Artist Village Detroit, retail, bike shop, restaurants and cafes, and a recent mixed-use rehab project at the Obama Building.

Adjacent residential blocks have moderately high vacancy and Land Bank ownership. Located in a transitional zone between highly desirable, intact Rosedale Park and Minock Park neighborhoods to the north and west, and the distressed Brightmoor neighborhood to the southeast.

Near Claremont-Rosedale neighborhood, where there are many aging homeowners and a need for local senior housing.

Development Overview

Opportunities

- Located in SNF area
- Walking distance from significant commercial hub and transit.
- Adjacent to stable and desirable residential neighborhoods.
- Auditorium/Gym/Cafeteria cluster is highly accessible and can be operated independently from the rest of the school.

Challenges

- Mix of architectural styles; lacks overall historic integrity.
- 1950s wings are utilitarian design; glass block windows not particularly desirable feature.
- Heavily scrapped
- Windows and roof need total replacement.

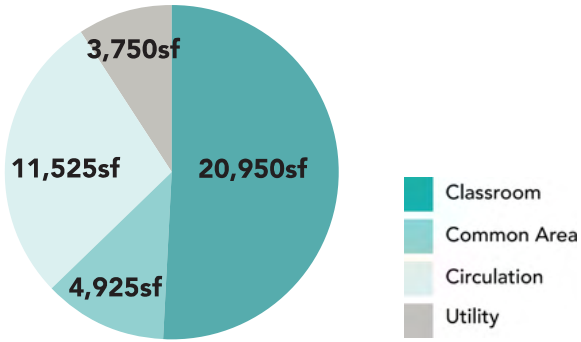
Real Estate Market summary:
(1-mi radius, compared against subset of 39 City-owned vacant schools)

- Multifamily: Above Average
- Retail: Above Average
- Office: Below Average
- Industrial: Below Average

Market-based Use Recommendations

- Best market for senior housing, due to limited existing supply, high rent, and above-average projected senior population growth.

Existing Floorplan + Program



41,140 sf net floor area

Structure
- Reinforced concrete frame (1925)
- Concrete-encased steel frame (1959)

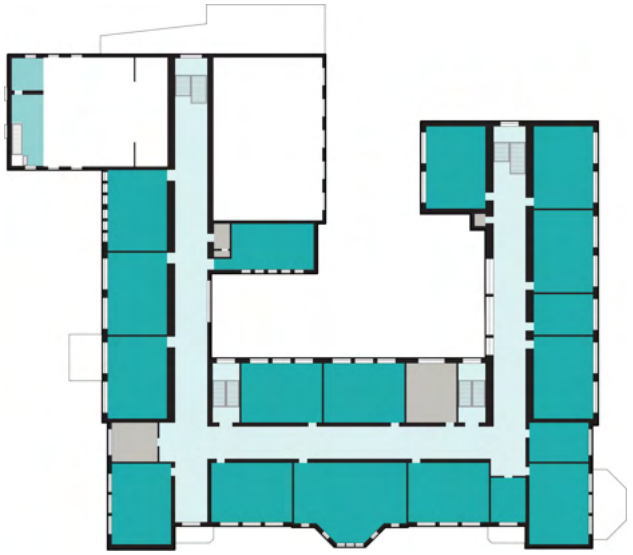
Roof System:
- Wood deck on steel structure (1925)
- Concrete tee-joist slab (1959)
- Metal deck on steel beams (gym/auditorium)
- Bituminous built-up roof with internal drains

Facade:
- Brick with limestone/cast stone accents
- Wood frame windows (1925)
- Glass block with operable steel windows (1959)

Floor System:
- Concrete joist and slab

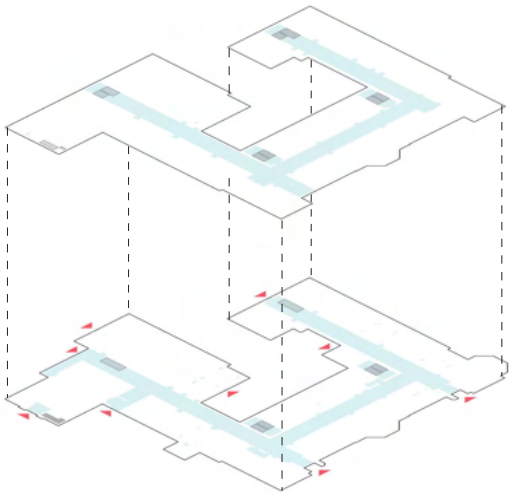
Interior Walls:
- Plaster (1925)
- Painted CMU (1959)

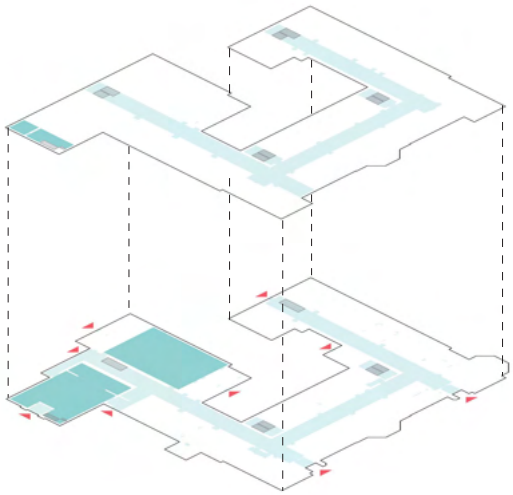
Second Floor

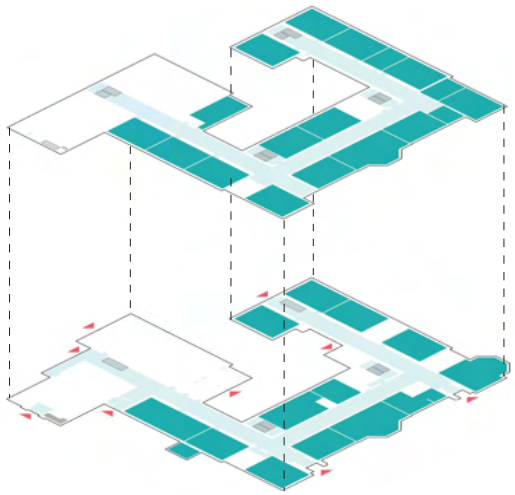


First Floor

Existing Floorplan + Program







Circulation

Burt's circulation follows a U-pattern, with a double-loaded corridor in the original south unit, and primarily single-loaded corridors in the later east and west units. Two main entrances are located on the south elevation in the original unit; there are three major entrances serving the gym and auditorium cluster, in addition to two service entrances.

Corridors are 12' wide throughout.

Common Areas

The gym and auditorium are clustered at the northwest corner of the school. They are served by multiple entrances, and can be operated separately from the rest of the school.

Both spaces are approximately 40x60' with 17' ceilings.

Classroom Areas

There are 27 of classrooms are arranged around the outer perimeter of the building, on the south, west, and east elevations. Only six classrooms face the paved inner courtyard.

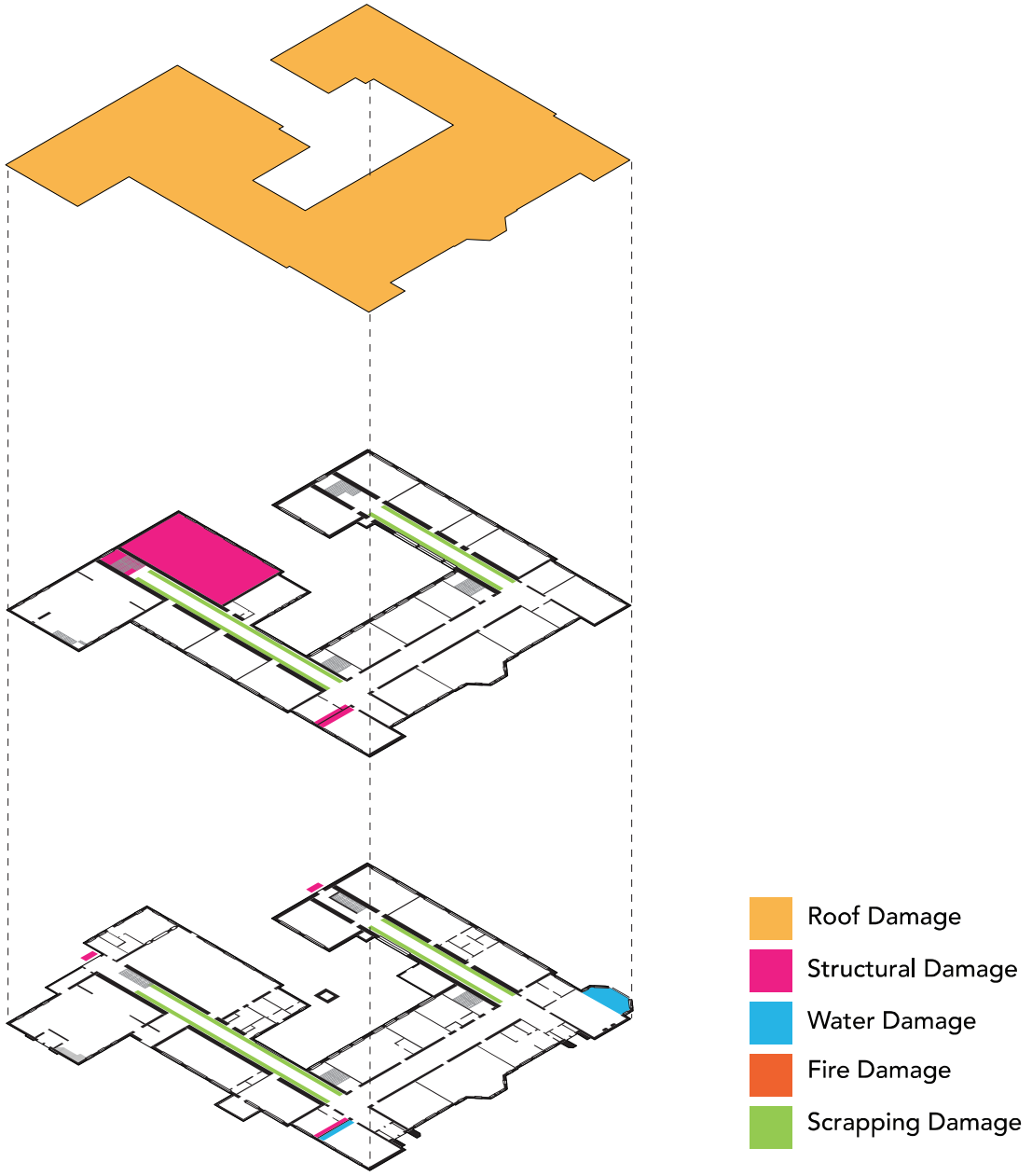
Typical classroom dimensions are 22' wide by 30' to 30'6" length, with typical ceiling height of 12', but ranging between 10' to 12'4".

Building Distress

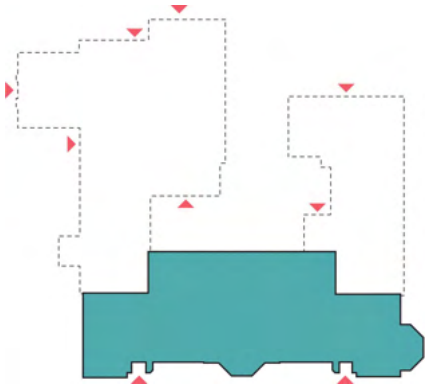
Roof
- Structural deterioration of entire roof system; replace entire roof.
- Inspect and repair clogged roof drains.

Second Floor
- Structural deterioration of floor slab beam at southwest corner; may be repaired in place.
- Gymnasium roof structure requires inspection; vertical cracking at CMU walls at roof beams and corrosion of metal deck.
- Roof slab cracked over northwest stair; likely requires replacement.
- Lockers removed from hallways.
- Windows scrapped throughout.

First Floor
- Water damage and collapsed partition wall at southwest corner.
- Masonry distress due to water infiltration observed across facade. Cast stone/limestone units distressed particularly at north entrances.
- Lockers removed from hallways.
- Windows scrapped throughout.

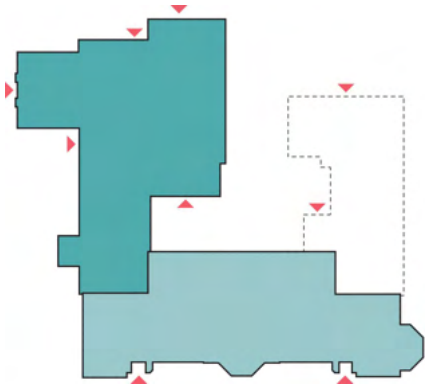


Building Evolution



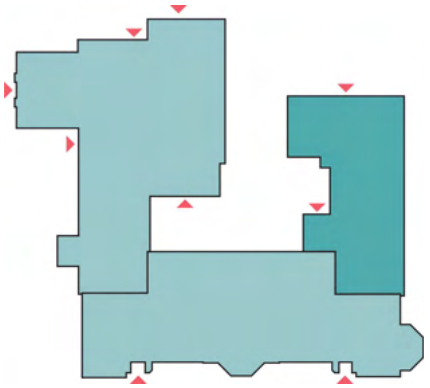
Original Unit 1925

Original unit is a symmetrical, two-story, double-loaded block with 11 classrooms, library, kindergarten, and office. The architecture is a traditional collegiate gothic style.



First Addition (1959)

The west wing, added in 1959, is a modern, International Style building with horizontal glass block ribbon windows (later replaced). The unit consists of a single-loaded corridor with five classrooms, a gym, and an auditorium.



Second Addition (1959)

The east wing, also added in 1959 and built in a modern style, contains eight classrooms on a single-loaded corridor.

School History

Thomas Burt School Elementary

Redford Union Schools initiated the erection of the Thomas Burt Elementary School in 1925. The Detroit Board of Education acquired ownership of the property in 1926, prior to the school building's completion, when the neighborhood was annexed by the City of Detroit. The school's original unit had a capacity of 580 and included 10 classrooms, an auditorium, gym, and kindergarten. A detached, portable building with two classrooms was also located within the parcel. Upon its completion, Detroit Board of Education and City building inspection officials noted that the school was not well built; newspaper articles from the day stated that the Burt School's chimney was built "upside down" and that the ceiling in the building's playroom had collapsed. The Detroit Board of Education closed the building in May 1926 due to these issues. The school was reopened after repairs were completed with an enrollment of over 700. Due to overcrowded conditions at Burt, its students were required to attend school on a half-day basis.

The Detroit Board of Education sought approval to increase their 1930 construction budget by nearly $3,000,000 so that they might better accommodate the city's rapidly-expanding school-aged population. The Detroit Board of Education had targeted $100,000 of their proposed budget expansion towards the erection of a new addition at the Burt School. However, only $43,341 was ultimately approved for the acquisition of additional acreage for the Burt School site. In 1938, the Detroit Board of Education utilized Public Works Authority funds to erect a new portable building at the school site.

In 1949, Detroit residents approved a special millage which provided $50,000,000 to the Detroit Board of Education so that it might update and expand its facilities to support a projected enrollment increase of 40,000 students between 1955 and 1963. During this building campaign, the Detroit Board of Education erected 119 new school buildings and additions to existing buildings, to include a large addition to the Burt School in 1953-1954. The new addition, which was erected at a cost of $271,152, boasted a capacity of 350 and housed a number of additional classrooms. Architects Schreve, Walker, and Associates provided the new wing's design.

In 1959, Burt School was reorganized to include a junior high school in addition to its elementary. By 1970, the school was at capacity and served a predominantly white student body.

The Detroit Public School system, successor to the Detroit Board of Education., permanently closed the school in 2010 and subsequently sold the property to the City of Detroit in 2015.

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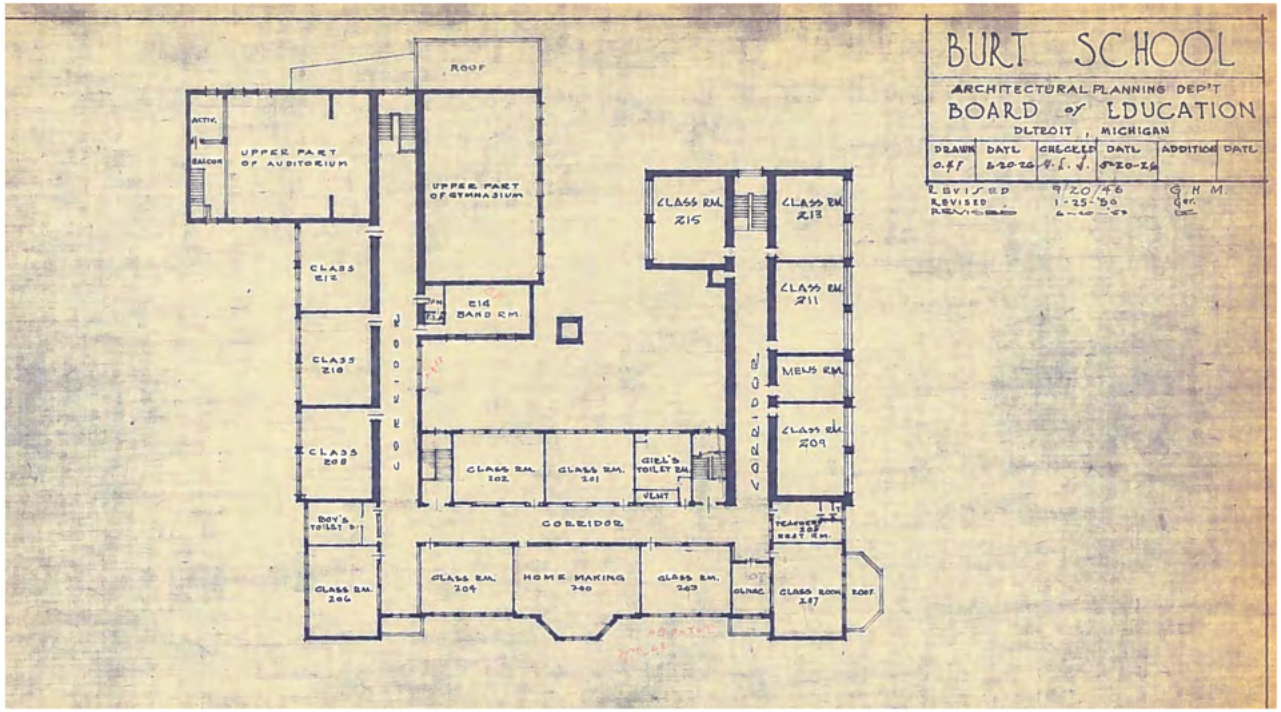
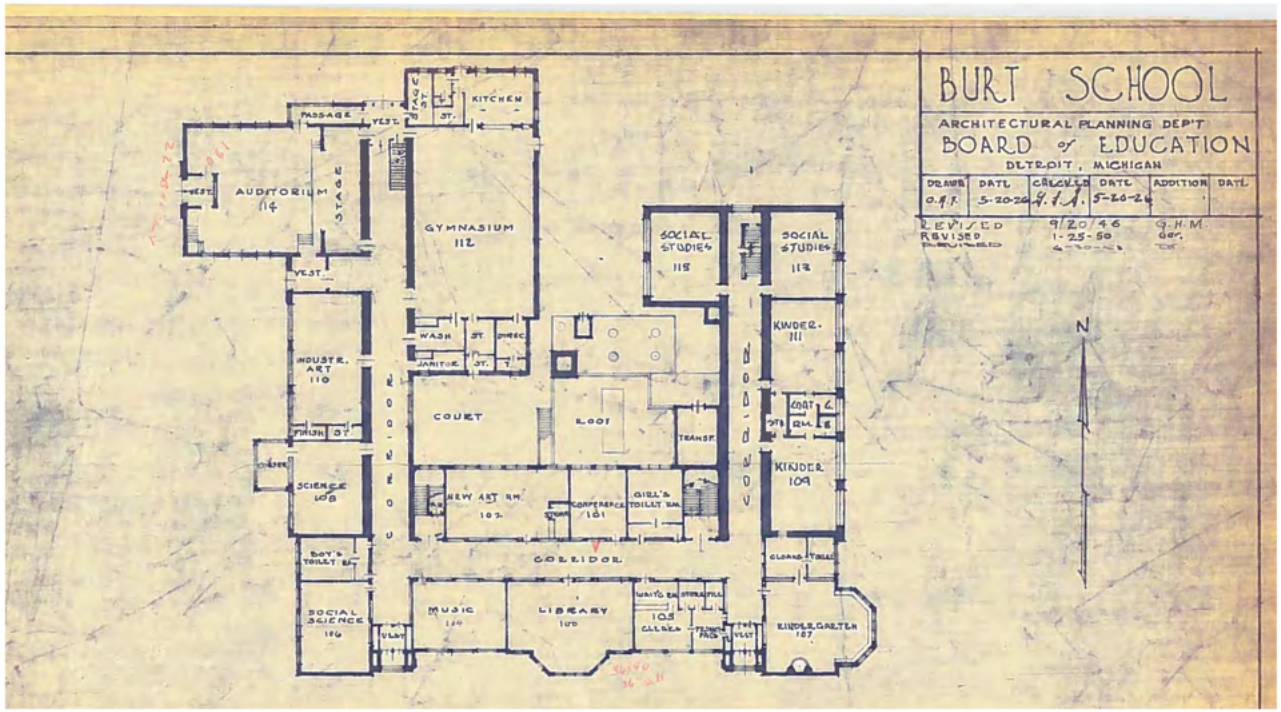

BURT SCHOOL
ARCHITECTURAL PLANNING DEP'T
BOARD of EDUCATION
DETROIT, MICHIGAN
ROOF
UPPER PART OF AUDITORIUM
UPPER PART OF GYMNASIUM
CLASS RM. 215
CLASS RM. 213
CLASS RM. 211
MENS RM.
CLASS RM. 209
CLASS 212
CLASS 210
CLASS 208
E16 BAND RM.
CLASS RM. 202
CLASS RM. 201
GIRL'S TOILET RM.
BOY'S TOILET RM.
CLASS RM. 206
CLASS RM. 204
HOME MAKING 240
CLASS RM. 243
CLASS ROOM 207
CORRIDOR


BURT SCHOOL
ARCHITECTURAL PLANNING DEP'T
BOARD of EDUCATION
DETROIT, MICHIGAN
KITCHEN
PASSAGE
AUDITORIUM 114
STAGE
GYMNASIUM 112
SOCIAL STUDIES 115
SOCIAL STUDIES 113
KINDER. 111
INDUSTR. ART 110
COURT
ROOF
TRANSP.
KINDER. 109
SCIENCE 108
NEW ART RM 102
CONFERENCE 101
GIRL'S TOILET RM.
BOY'S TOILET RM.
SOCIAL SCIENCE 106
MUSIC 104
LIBRARY 103
KINDERGARTEN 107
CORRIDOR
N

The main (south) facade of the original 1925 wing.

Courtyard and modern-style 1959 wings viewed from the north. The 1959 wings featured large glass-block ribbon windows, a contrast to traditional windows in the original unit.

The 1959 auditorium features an enclosed vestibule, a small second-floor balcony, and tall windows on both sides. Finishes are simple, painted CMU block.

Gymnasium and kitchen serving window.

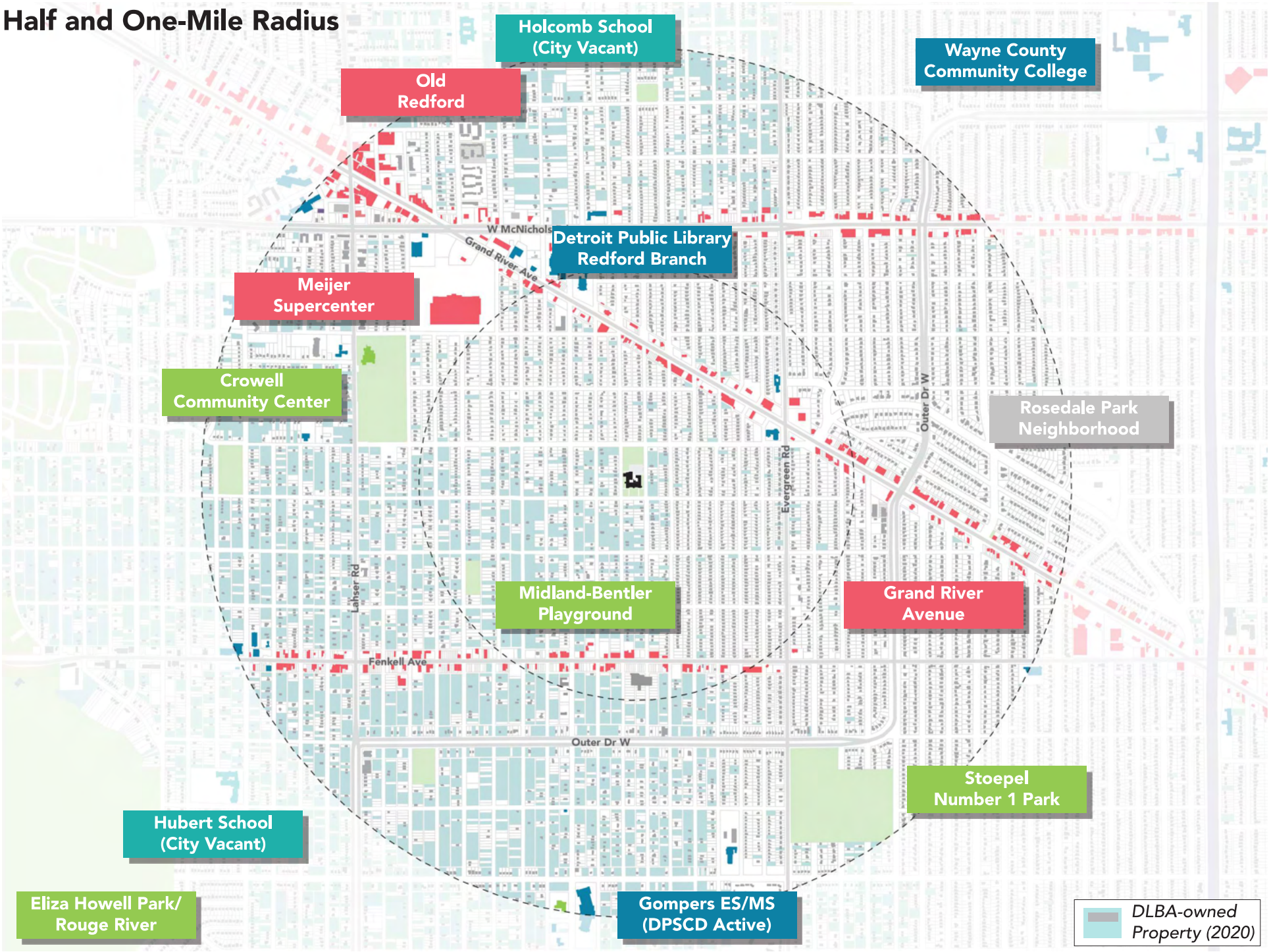
Window configuration and finishes in typical 1925 classroom. Original wood frame windows and their metal replacements are gone; radiators have also been scrapped.

Kindergarten bay window in original 1925 unit. Windows, original wood benches, and radiators have been removed. Water infiltration at the protruding roof has caused plaster failure.

Typical window configuration and concrete block finishes in modern 1959 classrooms.

Typical corridor in 1959 addition. Lockers and ductwork have been scrapped, but otherwise the corridor is clean and in serviceable condition.

Half and One-Mile Radius



Neighborhood By The Numbers

54/100

Walkscore
Somewhat walkable

0.2mi

Transit Access
Less than 5 minute walk to nearest
DDOT Connect Ten or Key Route

1.4mi

Freeway Access
5-10 minute drive
to nearest freeway ramp

0.4mi

Park Access
Less than 15 minute walk
to nearest park (1+ acre)

0.7 mi

Nearest Recreation Center
Less than 15 minute walk
to nearest City Rec Center

0.5mi

Library Access
Less than 15 minute walk
to nearest public library

28%

Vacant/DLBA Property
Moderate rate of vacancy
within 0.25 mile radius (2020)

245

Building Alteration Permits
High construction activity
within 1mi radius (2016-2018)

2.7%

Senior Population Growth
Moderate projected growth
within 1mi radius (2019-2024)

Financial Analysis Summary

Burt Elementary School is in the Grandriver Northwest SNF area. The building is located at 20710 Pilgrim St. in the Brightmoor neighborhood in District 1. It is approximately five miles from the Joe Lewis Greenway and near the NW Grandriver McNichols commercial corridor. Total residential population in 2019 was approximately 15,600 and 2019-2024 projected annual population growth rate is -0.4%. However, the senior population annual growth rate is projected at 2.7%. According to EMSI, 2019 estimated median household income for the area was $37,000. 4.2% of the population took public transportation to work.

In terms of built conditions, there are approximately 600 buildings in the 1-mile radius around Burt, and 250 new construction and alteration building permits, according to City of Detroit data. This is an above average number of permits in 1-mile radius compared to other schools in the Vacant School portfolio, and if viewed as proxy for activity and investment, could indicate positive future trends and other development in the area. Burt scored a Walkscore of 54, 'somewhat walkable' – some errands can be accomplished on foot (Walkscore).

Owner-occupied housing units are expected to grow marginally at 0.1% annually (EMSI). In terms of multi-family development, the area has an above-average number of HRD units at 734, and above average market rate rents as recorded by CoStar - $16 psf or $800 per unit on average. Vacancy rates were low at 6%. Burt also has one 160,000 sf senior building, which averages $21 psf or $1,100 per unit rents.

Burt is near the NW Grandriver McNichols commercial corridor featured in the 2018 Detroit Neighborhood Retail Opportunity Study. The 1-mile radius area around Burt contains an average amount of retail compared to other schools in the portfolio, including six grocery stores, and about average retail rents and vacancy rates, approximately $11 psf and 2% vacancy (EMSI / CoStar). Burt outperforms in terms of retail sales, with $157 million annually, compared to an expected value of $150 million given its local population (EMSI). This indicates that people travel from outside the 1-mile radius to shop in the neighborhoods around Burt, a good sign for neighborhood vibrancy and economic activity.
There are 15 buildings categorized as commercial office in the 1-mile radius according to CoStar, with slightly lower than average rents ($12 psf). Burt has little industrial inventory in the 1-mile surrounding area, only seven buildings and no recorded rent data.

From Profile Recommendation: *Recommended for Senior Housing because 1 existing building with average Senior Housing vacancy rate, very high Senior Housing rents at $21 psf and above-average senior population growth rate projections.*

Market Information

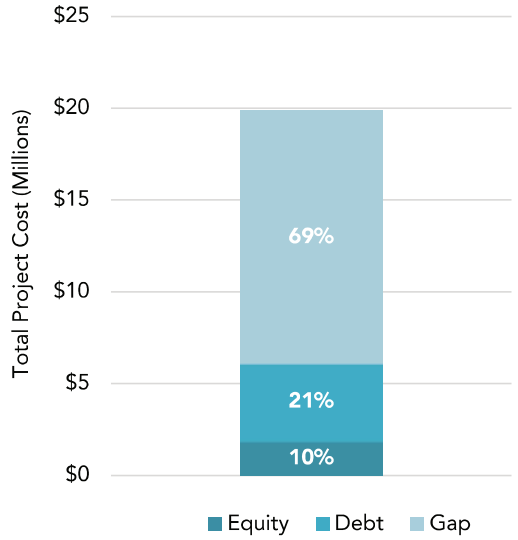
Burt 1

Development Type	Gross Area (SF)
Rehabilitated Structure	46,196
Demolished Structure	-

Income (PSF values)	
Blended Rental Income	$10.00
Less Vacancy	$0.50
Less Expense	$1.50
2022 NOI (escalated)	$8.50
Blended Cap Rate	8.4%
Capped NOI	$101
Total Value	**$4,700,000**

High Level Funding Breakdown		
Equity	$1.99	10%
Debt	$4.19	21%
Gap	$13.71	69%
Total Project Cost	**$19.89**	

2022 Costs	
Total Rehab Cost	$12,100,000
Total Fit-Out Cost	$7,800,000
Total Project Cost	**$19,900,000**
Gap	**$ 13,700,000**



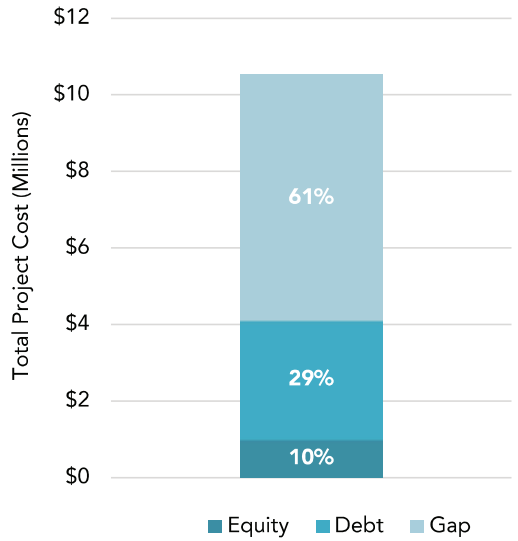
Burt 2

Development Type	Gross Area (SF)
Rehabilitated Structure	19,318
Demolished Structure	26,878

Income (PSF values)	
Blended Rental Income	$17.00
Less Vacancy	$1.00
Less Expense	$2.00
2022 NOI (escalated)	$14.00
Blended Cap Rate	8.0%
Capped NOI	$177
Total Value	**$3,400,000**

High Level Funding Breakdown		
Equity	$1.05	10%
Debt	$3.07	29%
Gap	$6.41	61%
Total Project Cost	**$10.54**	

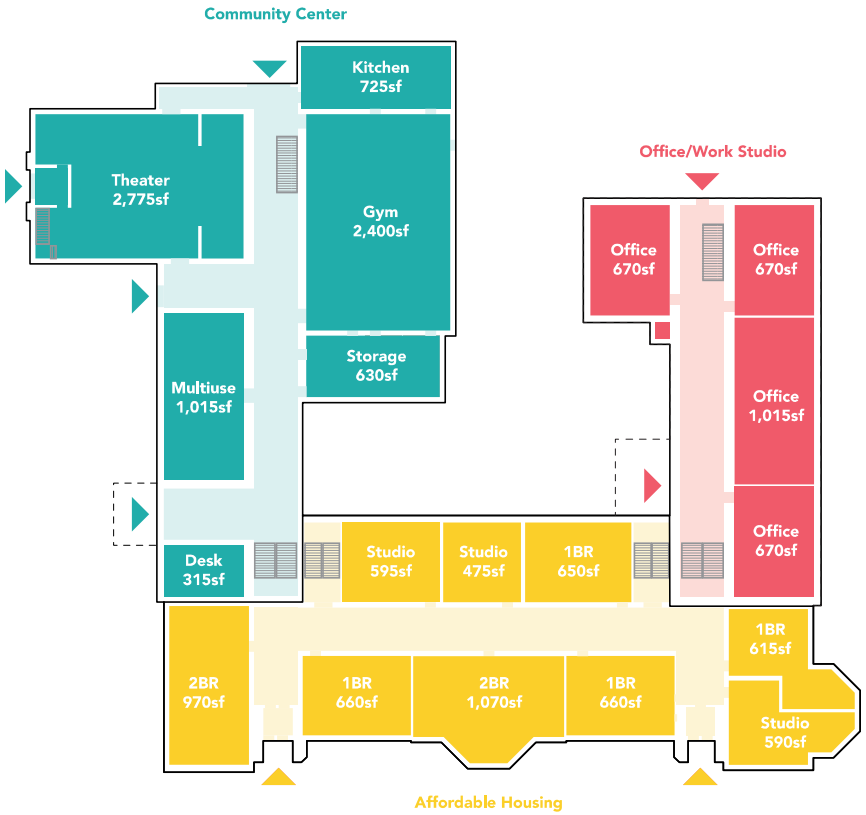
2022 Costs	
Total Rehab Cost	$6,800,000
Total Fit-Out Cost	$3,700,000
Total Project Cost	$10,500,000
Gap	**$ 6,400,000**



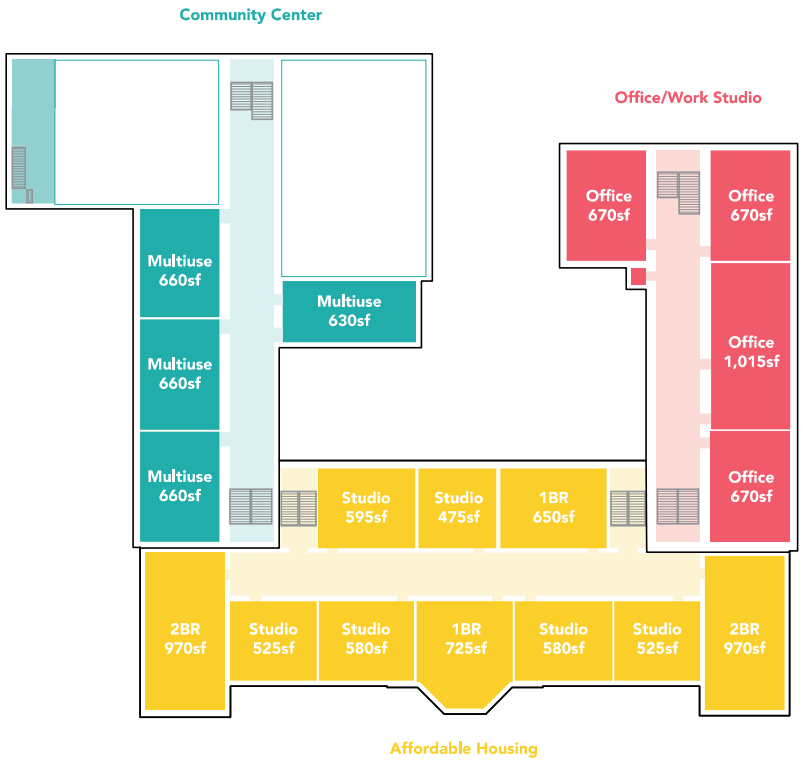
Scenario 1: Triple Play

Activate 3 wings separately

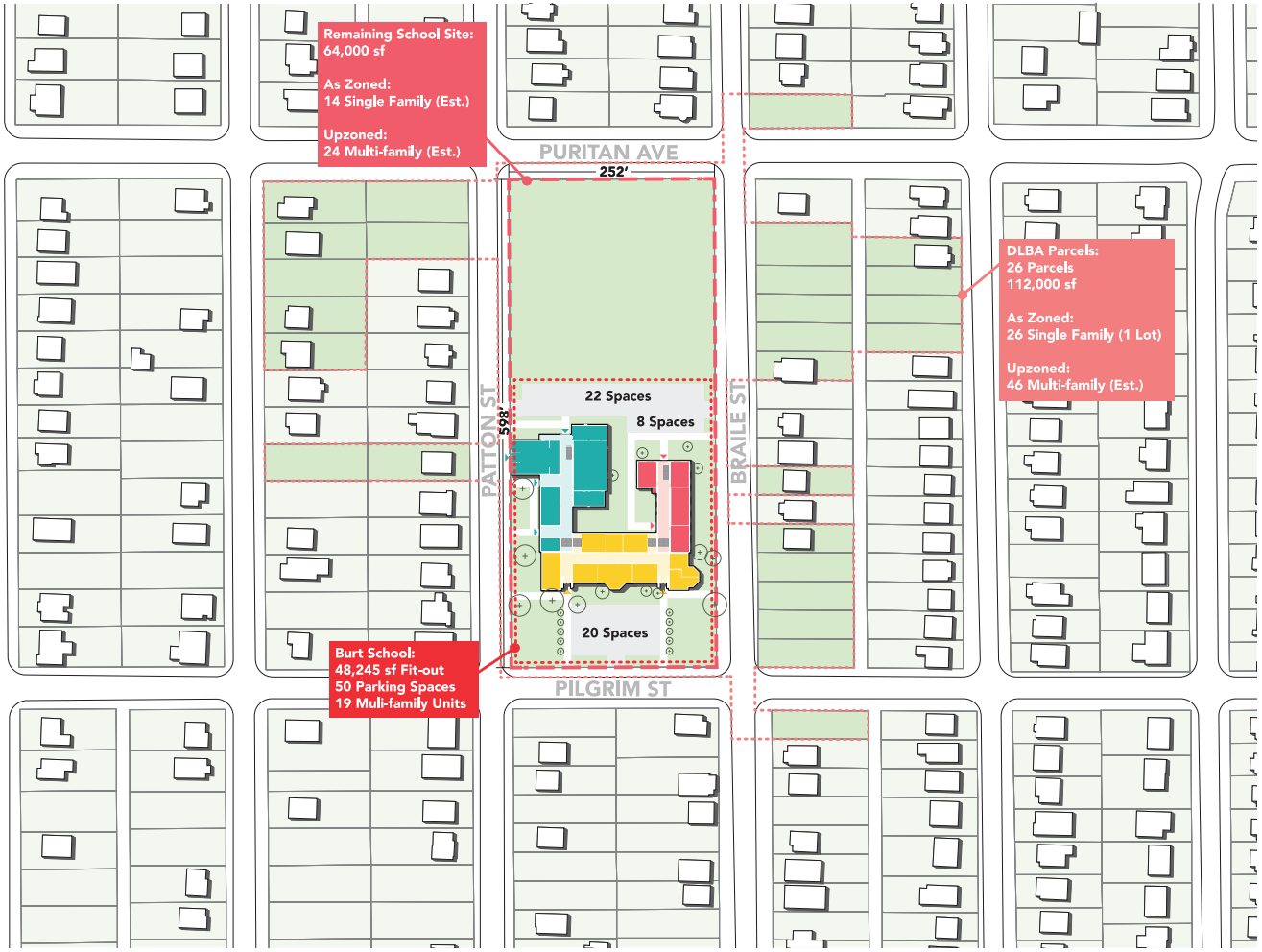
Burt features three distinct units with different architectural styles. Due to the type of historic finishes and window configuration, the original 1920s wing is better suited for housing than the two 1950s wings. The west wing, with its large gym and auditorium can be used for community recreation, culture, and gathering space The east wing has continuous ribbon windows and can easily be subdivided into smaller office spaces or opened up to accommodate open-plan workspaces. Here, each wing is shown operating independently of the others; each has two dedicated entrances and self-contained circulation. This scenario could be developed all at once, or in separate phases.



First Floor



Second Floor



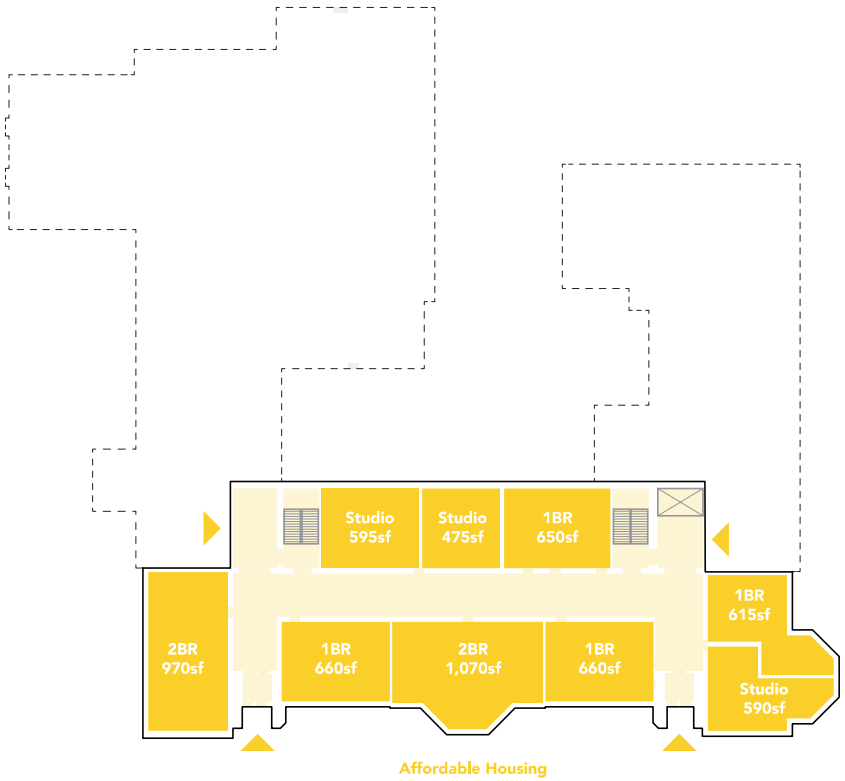
Studio (475-595sf)	9
1BR (615-725sf)	6
2BR (970-1070sf)	4
TOTAL UNITS	19

Program	Building Type	Finish Type	Area %	Gross Area (SF)	Volume (CU FT)	Unit Cost	Subtotal Cost
Affordable Housing	Plaster w/ Conc Structure	Historic	42%	19,318		153	$ 2,955,677.44
Community/Rec Center	CMU w/ Conc Structure	Historic	35%	16,139		159	$ 2,566,125.80
Office/Studio	CMU w/ Conc Structure	Historic	23%	10,739		159	$ 1,707,451.84
Parking (50 spots)						12000	$ 600,000.00
Developed Area (GFA)				**46,196**			
Fit-out subtotal							**$ 7,829,255.08**
Rehab subtotal							**$12,058,372.38**
COST TOTAL							**$ 19,887,627.46**

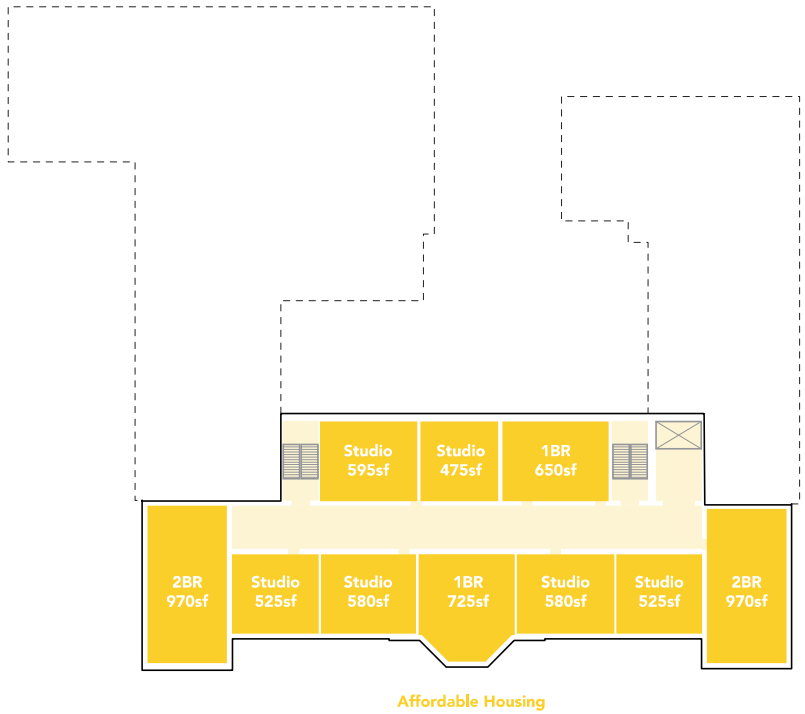
Scenario 2: All Original

Rehab original 1920s school and demolish 1950s wings

Burt features three distinct units with different architectural styles. Due to the type of historic finishes and window configuration, the original 1920s wing is better suited for housing than the two 1950s wings. This scenario proposes demolishing the modern wings to create an all-housing development housed in the original historic building. Demolishing the large, modern wings reduces the overall rehab costs, and creates more room on site for new construction or open space.



First Floor



Second Floor

Studio (475-595sf)	9
1BR (615-725sf)	6
2BR (970-1070sf)	4
TOTAL UNITS	19

Program	Building Type	Finish Type	Area %	Gross Area (SF)	Volume (CU FT)	Unit Cost	Subtotal Cost
Affordable Housing	Plaster w/ Conc Structure	Historic	42%	19,318		153	$ 2,955,677.44
Demolition			58%	26,878	371,475	0.7	$ 260,032.61
Elevator						225000	$ 225,000.00
Parking						12000	$ 288,000.00
Developed Area (GFA)				**19,318**			
Fit-out Cost							**$ 3,728,710.05**
Rehab Cost							**$6,809,496.18**
COST TOTAL							**$ 10,538,206.23**

1 Detroit Open

Address: 24601 Frisbee
Parcel: 22124030.006L
District: 1
SNF Area:
Owner: City of Detroit
Site Area: 3.78 ac
Gross Floor Area: 35,250 sf
Floors: 1
Plan Type: U
School Type: Elementary
Year Built: 1924, 1955
Zoned: R1
Base Rehab Cost (est): $1.9M
Total Rehab Cost (est): $10.3M

Condition Market

History Neighborhood

Building Overview

1-story double-loaded U layout.

Original 1924 unit consisted of only kindergarten and three classrooms on southwest wing.

Original construction is wood frame with red brick exterior and plaster/ lathe interior.

Majority of existing school was built in 1955 with modern post-and-beam construction, with CMU infill.

1955 facade is tan brick and glass blcok; original unit was given a facelift to match.

Roof is in poor condition, allowing extensive water infiltration throughout building.

Structure and envelope are otherwise in good shape.

Interior finishes are generally intact, including 1955 windows.

Partly-enclosed green courtyard at rear of building.

Attached boiler room with equipment intact. Large space with nearly 30' ceilings and floor below grade.

Neighborhood Overview

Located in 5 Points neighborhood in the Old Redford area.

Predominantly single-family residential neighborhood which appears stable.

Within a half mile of several major transportation and commercial corridors: Grand River, Telegraph, 7 Mile and 8 Mile.

Located less than 2 miles northwest of Grand River and Lahser, the heart of Old Redford and a thriving commercial node. The area includes landmarks like the Redford Theater, Artist Village, successful small restaurants and cafes, and a new Meijer supercenter.

Adjacent to Northwest/Grand River SNF Area.

Development Overview

Opportunities

- Small building and simple layout make for a manageable project.
- Accessible building: single story with wide hallways.
- Classrooms have large windows and relatively low ceilings—more comfortable, intimate space for residential.
- Post-and-beam construction allows for flexible interior spaces.
- Stable, desirable neighborhood.

Challenges

- Located away from commercial corridors.

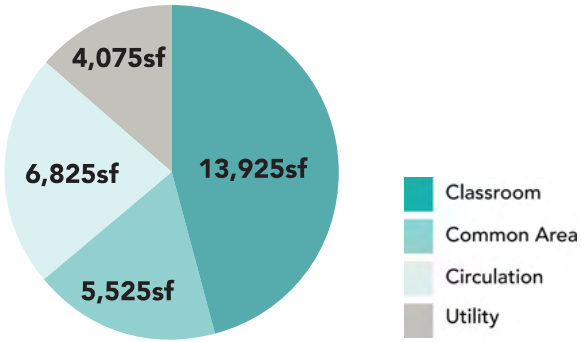
Real Estate Market summary:
(1-mi radius, compared against subset of 39 City-owned vacant schools)

- Multifamily: Above Average
- Retail: Above Average
- Office: Average
- Industrial: Average

Market-based Use Recommendations

- Best market for senior housing, due to limited existing supply, high rent, and high projected senior population growth.

Existing Floorplan + Program



30,350 sf net floor area

Structure
- Load-bearing masonry (original unit)
- Concrete frame w/ CMU backup (addition)

Roof System:
- Wood deck (original unit)
- Concrete tee joist-slab (addition)
- Built-up roofing
- Internal drains

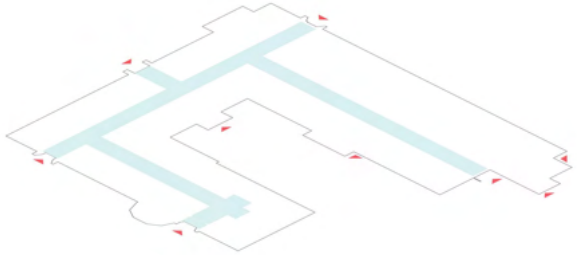
Facade:
- Brick with limestone/cast stone accents

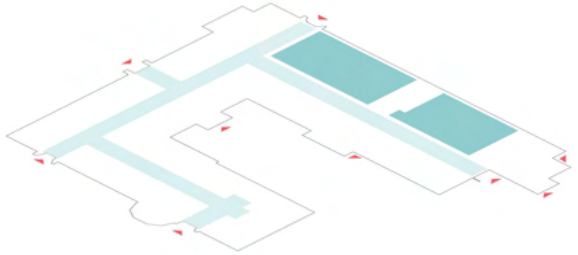
Floor System:
- Concrete joist and slab

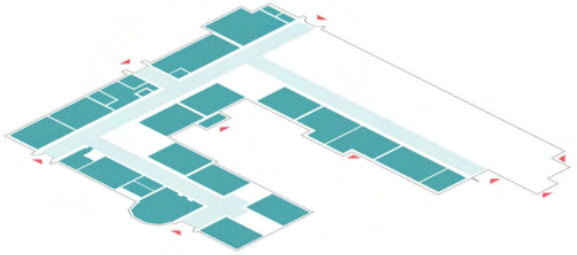
Interior Walls:
- Plaster and brick finish (original unit)
- Painted CMU (addition)

First Floor

Existing Floorplan + Program







Circulation

Circulation is in a double-loaded U configuration. Corridors are 12' wide throughout, with low 8' ceilings in the large addition. The main entrance is located in the center of the north elevation; there are secondary entrances at each corner of the building, as well as courtyard access direct from specialty classrooms.

Common Areas

The gym/cafeteria and auditorium line the east elevation of the school.

The gym is a standard 40x60' box with 16.5' ceilings and a large attached kitchen.

The auditorium has a similar overall footprint as typical 40x60' elementary auditoriums, but with a shorter seating area and deeper stage.

Classroom Areas

Classrooms are located in all three wings and face both the street and the inner courtyard. The pair of science rooms and the large homemaking room have shallow rectangular window bays that extend into the central courtyard and provide direct access.

Classrooms in the original unit are approximately 21.5x30' with 11'9" ceilings. In the addition, rooms are 22.5x30' with 11' ceilings.

School History

Detroit Open School (H. Perrin Burgess Elementary School)

The Redford Union School District erected the H. Perrin Burgess Elementary School's original unit as a one-story, four-room schoolhouse in 1924-1925. At the time of its original construction, the building housed a kindergarten and three classrooms. The school was absorbed by the City of Detroit's school system during the 1926-1927 school year. Aerial maps indicate that a detached, gable-roof building was erected on the site, directly to the south of the original unit, sometime between 1937 and 1939.

In 1949, Detroit residents approved a special millage which provided $50,000,000 to the Detroit Board of Education so that it might update and expand its facilities to support a projected enrollment increase of 40,000 students between 1955 and 1963. During this building campaign, the Detroit Board of Education erected 119 new school buildings and additions to existing buildings, to include a large addition to the Burgess Elementary School in 1954-1955. The 14-room Burgess addition boasted a capacity of 525 pupils (grades K-8), and was erected at a cost of $758,282. It housed a multi-purpose room, kitchen, auditorium, industrial arts room, homemaking room, library, office and a number of additional classrooms. The new addition also included a heating plant/boiler room, and the lighting within the original 1924-1925 unit was modernized. The exterior stone cladding of the original, four-room unit was also refaced with brick due to its poor condition.

By 1957, enrollment had ballooned to 700, which required that the school day be organized according to a 14-section platoon schedule. Sometime between 1961 and 1967, the property's circa 1937, detached building was demolished.

The Detroit Open School, the Detroit Public School system's first alternative education program, was initiated in 1972 and was located within a number of school buildings prior to its permanent establishment within the building in 1978. That year, the Detroit Open School included 230 students, six full-time teachers, and one part-time teacher. The school was later renamed the Detroit Open School as the program occupied the entire building. Despite academic success, the Detroit Public School System (DPS), successor to the Detroit Board of Education, permanently closed the school in 2009. In 2015, the DPS sold the property to its current owner, the City of Detroit.

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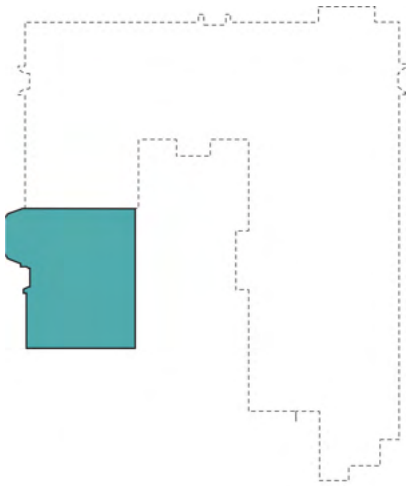
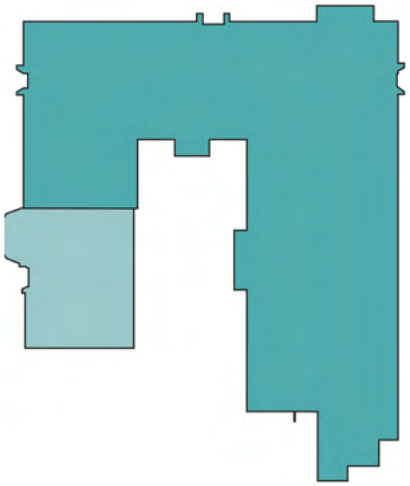
Building Evolution



Original Unit (1924)

The original school was a single-story 4-room schoolhouse, including three classrooms and a kindergarten arranged in a square.



Addition (1955)

The school size was dramatically increased in 1955, with the addition of seven standard classrooms, four large specialty classrooms, auditorium, gym/cafeteria, and administrative offices. The new addition was built in a modern style, and the original unit was given a facelift to match.

The west facade of the school, showing the original 1924 unit and the 1955 addition. The re-clad original unit includes the large kindergarten bay window and the portion behind it.

The kindergarten bay has a layout typical of schools from the 1920s. The windows were replaced with glass-block and operable steel-frame style to match the 1955 addition.

Classrooms are brightly-lit thanks to the wall-to-wall windows. Partion walls can be easily added or demolished thanks to the school's flexible post-and-beam structure.

The school features an attached boiler room accessible from the main hallway. The space is a naturally-lit sunken cube, measuring almost 30 feet in all directions.

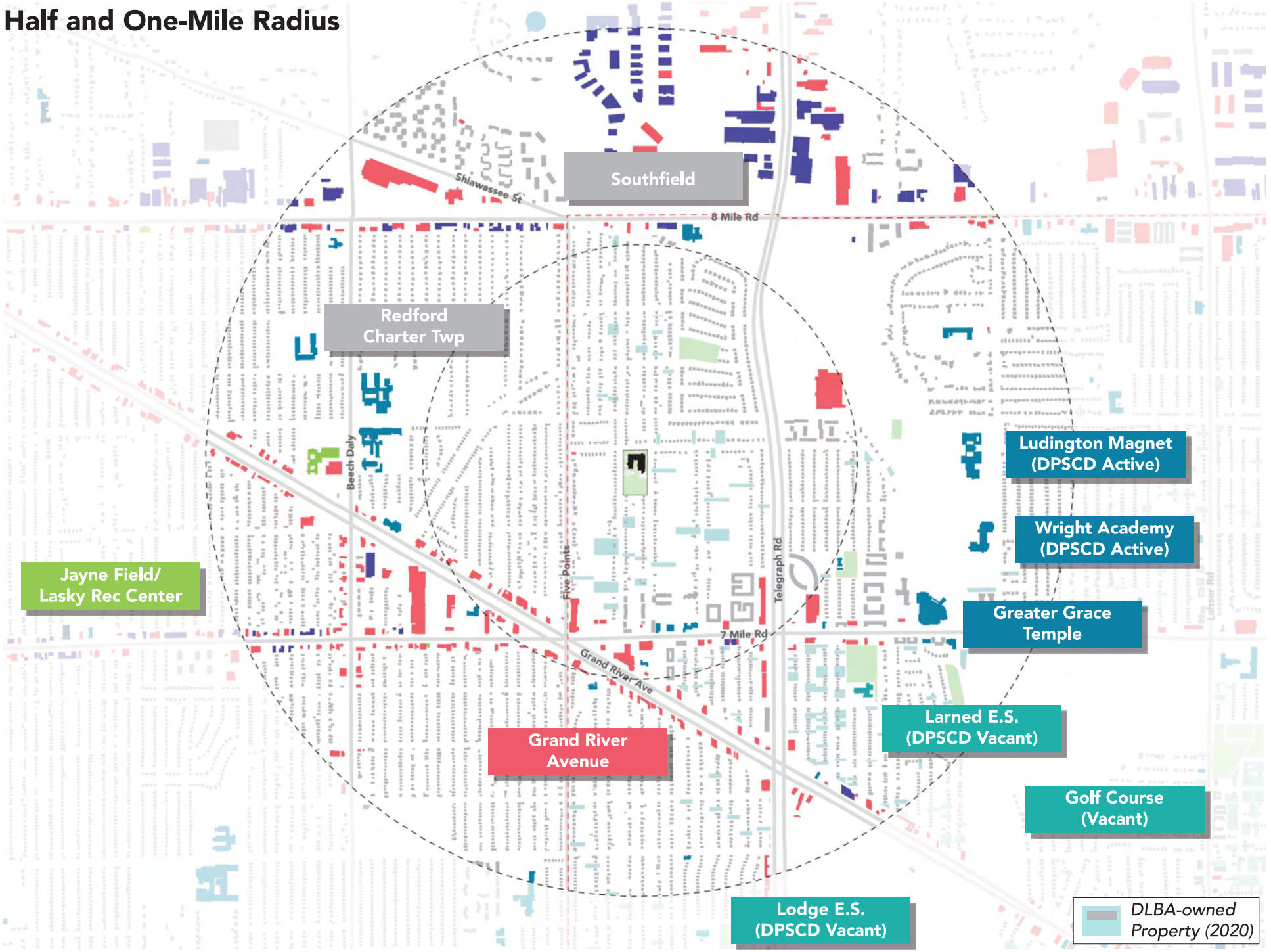
The original unit has four classrooms linked by a cross-shaped circulation/common area. The common space is lined by open cubbies, and feels more like a large room than a corridor.

The main (north) corridor in the 1955 unit is 12′ wide, but has only 8′ ceilings—lower than at other historic schools. Water infiltration was observed throughout all corridors.

The simple concrete-block auditorium was built as part of the 1955 addition. It is in good condition, with seats and finishes intact.

The gym/cafeteria is a 40x60′ box with 16.5′ ceilings, standard for elementary schools. There is an attached kitchen with small serving window located at the south end (visible on rear wall)

Half and One-Mile Radius



Neighborhood By The Numbers

34/100

Walkscore
Car-dependent

0.2mi

Transit Access
Less than 5 minute walk to nearest
DDOT Connect Ten or Key Route

1.4mi

Freeway Access
5-10 minute drive
to nearest freeway ramp

0.4mi

Park Access
10-15 minute walk
to nearest park (1+ acre)

3.6mi

Nearest Recreation Center
No City Rec Center
within walking distance

0.2mi

Library Access
Less than 5 minute walk
to nearest public library

10%

Vacant/DLBA Property
Low rate of vacancy
within 0.25 mile radius (2020)

112

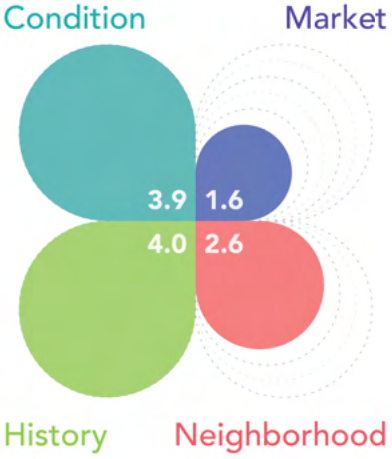
Building Alteration Permits
Moderate construction activity
within 1mi radius (2016-2018)

3.1%

Senior Population Growth
High projected growth
within 1mi radius (2019-2024)

1 Healy

Address: 12834 West Parkway
Parcel: 22119172-87
District: 1
SNF Area: n/a
Owner: City of Detroit
Site Area: 4.18 ac
Gross Floor Area: 16,700 sf
Floors: 2
Plan Type: I
School Type: Elementary
Year Built: 1950
Zoned: R1
Base Rehab Cost (est): $460K
Total Rehab Cost (est): $5.1M



Building Overview

Tiny building that was started but never completed.

2-story box, with double-loaded T-corridor.

Lacks large shared spaces such as gym, auditorium, or library.

1st floor north classrooms have been converted into a basketball court (with floor markings and 8-foot hoops—would be difficult to shoot without hitting the standard-height ceiling!) and an auditorium (no stage or permanent seating. These rooms were possibly intended to be joined and converted to a library.

Finishes include gold glazed block throughout, with glazed green brick details.

Finish condition is in excellent shape throughout, including walls, furniture, and windows.

Building did exhibit some structural distress.

Neighborhood Overview

Located in Castle Rouge neighborhood, a postwar suburban-style residential neighborhood.

Most houses appear intact and well-cared for; few vacant properties or open lots.

Some medium-sized apartment complexes nearby.

No commercial development in immediate vicinity; nearest commercial corridor is Plymouth Ave, 1 mile south in Redford Charter Township.

Two blocks north of large Detroit Diesel plant, but separated by train tracks.

Across the street from St. Paul Monastery campus.

Surrounded by Rouge River parks: Eliza Howell Park to the north, Fullerton/ Outer Drive park to the west, and Rouge Park to the southwest.

Development Overview

Opportunities

- Small, compact building in good condition
- Classroom spaces easily converted to housing.
- Room for elevator in un-used stub hallway
- No large spaces to contend with.
- Compact building means more manageable total rehab costs, even if cost per square foot is same or higher than other buildings.

Challenges

- Lacks large shared spaces that could be used for community programming.
- Tucked away in a quiet and isolated residential area—not a high-traffic or high-activity location.

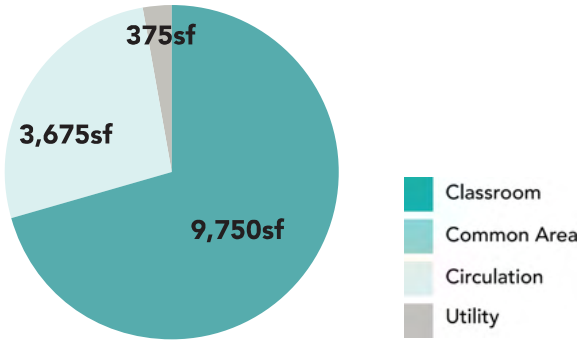
Real Estate Market summary:
(1-mi radius, compared against subset of 39 City-owned vacant schools)

- Multifamily: Average
- Retail: Average
- Office: Below Average
- Industrial: Average

Market-based Use Recommendations

- Best market for multifamily residential, due to low vacancy rates and average rent.

Existing Floorplan + Program



13,800 sf usable floor area

Structure
- Concrete frame

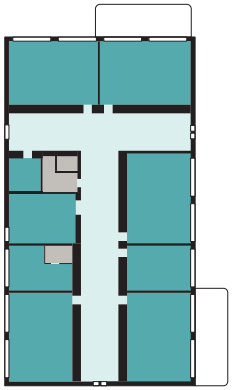
Roof System:
- Cast-in-place concrete
- Modified bitumen membrane

Facade:
- Brick with cast stone accents
- Glass block ribbon windows
- Operable steel frame windows with deep cast stone shading system

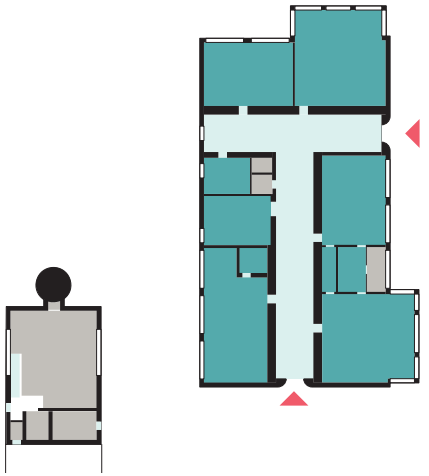
Floor System:
- Concrete joist and slab

Interior Walls:
- CMU (painted)
- Glazed block

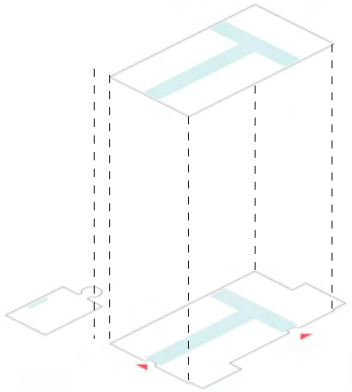
Second Floor

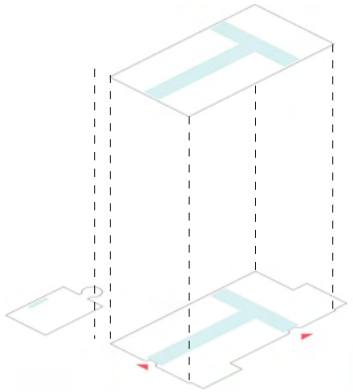


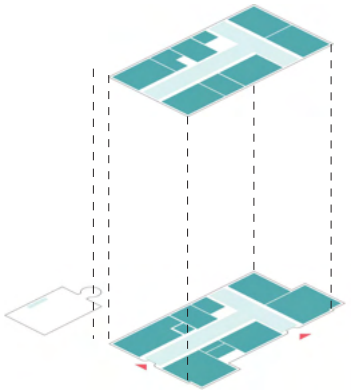
First Floor



Existing Floorplan + Program







Circulation

Circulation follows a double-loaded T-plan. Entrances and stairways are located at the south and east ends, while the west end dead-ends into a blank wall—an unbuilt addition would have connected at that point.

Common Areas

Healy lacks large common areas like a gym, cafeteria, and auditorium. Many of Detroit's historic schools were designed to be constructed in phases, often beginning with a small kindergarten and classroom unit like Healy; additional classrooms, permanent offices, and large shared spaces were typically added a few years after the first unit opened.

Classroom Areas

Because of Healy's compact layout and lack of large common spaces, it has the largest percentage of classroom space of any school in the study. Nearly 75% of the building is classroom space.

School History

Healy International (Daniel J. Healy Elementary School)

In 1949, Detroit residents approved a special millage which provided $50,000,000 to the Detroit Board of Education so that it might update and expand its facilities to ease overcrowded conditions which existed in the decade immediately following the close of World War II and to prepare for a projected enrollment increase of 40,000 students between 1955 and 1963. During this building campaign, which extended between 1949-1954, the Detroit Board of Education erected 119 new school buildings and additions to existing buildings. The Detroit Board of Education touted this new construction as the "latest in architectural advancement," noting that "simplicity distinguishes this architecture." New innovations which were widely introduced during this campaign included glass block windows, acoustically-treated ceilings, wide corridors, fluorescent lighting, concrete block interior walls, and multipurpose gym/cafeterias. Also, gyms and auditoriums often featured exterior points of ingress/egress to facilitate the public's access to the buildings beyond their educational use. In 1951, the Detroit Board of Education expended $10,200,000 of the campaign's funding to erect 11 new schools and additions.

The Daniel J. Healy Elementary School was completed in 1951 as a result of this phase of the constuction program in order to meet the needs of the rapidly growing population in the extreme northeast portion of Detroit. Upon its completion, the Healy School included eight classrooms, two kindergardens, a temporary gym, and a temporary auditorium. A free-standing boiler house was behind the school house. The school was erected at a cost of $357,969 and had a capacity of 385 students. A rendering and site plan dating from 1950 indicate that a large auditorium was planned for the complex; however, the wing was never built. Newspaper advertisements from 1952 highlighted the school as an amenity to the surrounding, newly-built, 350-home, "restricted" community that had been developed by local homebuilder Harry Slatkin.

In 1953, two transportable buildings were located on the school grounds in order to house first and second-grade students. The Healy School was annexed to the Gompers School in September 1957 but, in September 1958, it became its own separate unit. The school's crowded conditions were alleviated in 1959 with the erection of a new junior high unit at the nearby Hubert school, which allowed for Healy to shift from accomodating children in grades K-8 to K-6. Also, during that year, the property's northern boundary was expanded to allow for establishment of a playground and the improvement of the grounds with the installation of new trees, shrubs, and flower gardens. The building underwent no major alteration after the completion of its initial constuction. The Detroit Public Schools system, successor to the Detroit Board of Education, permanenetly closed the building in 2007 and sold the property to the City of Detroit in 2015.

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Detroit, City of, Board of Education, Architectural Planning Department. First Floor Plan and Site Plan, Healy Elementary. Detroit: Board of Education, 1954

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"Look Into Future" is Emphasized in Plan for 350-House Project. Detroit: Detroit Free Press; Apr 6, 1952; pg. 25

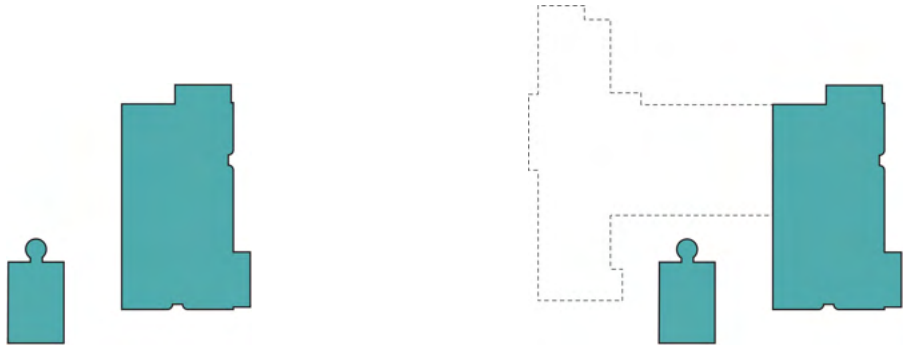
Crowding in Schools to be Eased. Detroit: Detroit Free Press; Aug 26, 1951; pg. 4

Addition to Schools Reported. Detroit: Detroit Free Press; Jul 5, 1953; pg. 9

Dedication of the New Daniel J. Healy School. Detroit: Detroit Free Press; May 29, 1952; pg. 5

Grover, John and Yvette van der Velde. A School District In Crisis, Detroit Public Schools 1842-2015. https://landgrid.com/reports/schools Loveland Technologies, 2016

Building Evolution



Original Unit (1950)

The original two-story unit consists of six standard classrooms, two large classrooms, and a kindergarten. A free-standing boiler house is connected to the school via underground tunnel.

Proposed Addition (Unbuilt)

A large future addition appears on the original site plans for the school. If built, the addition would have tripled the size of the existing school. The T-shaped addition would presumably have contained an auditorium and gym on the far west end, and a double-loaded classroom wing connected to the original building.

The southeast corner of the building, featuring the 1950s version of the kindergarten bay window. In this version, the traditional 5-sided bay window is replaced by a rectangular glass box.

The north half of the school's west elevation is only roughly finished with CMU, to accommodate a large planned addition that was ultimately never built.

A typical classroom, showing finishes in excellent condition.

A makeshift gym occupies a standard 22x30' classroom space. Healy lacks large shared spaces like a gym, auditorium, or cafeteria; these were to be included in the unbuilt addition.

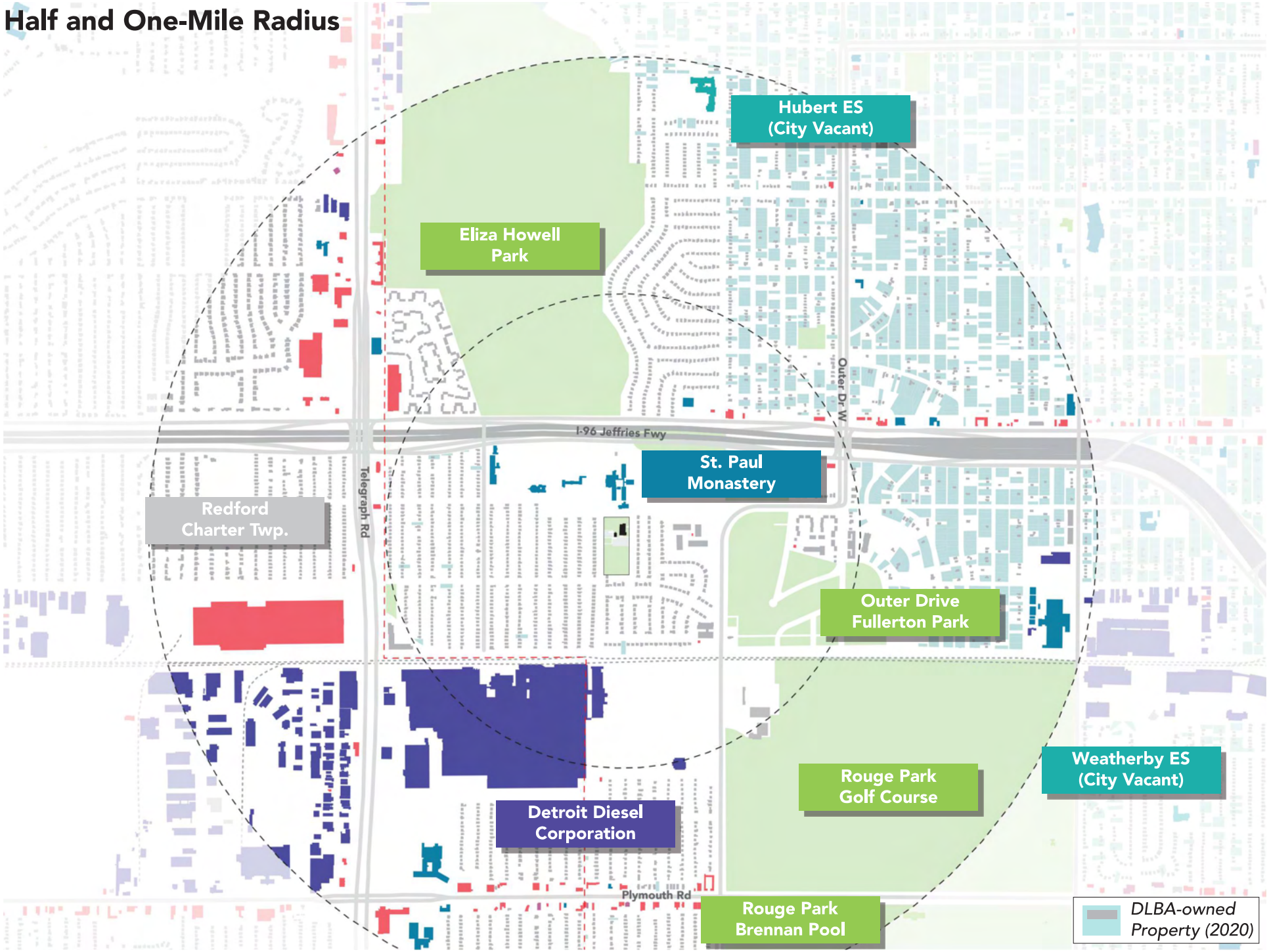
The kindergarten features a glass-box extension that allows daylight from three sides. The “temporary auditorium” space also has this feature.

The original wood bench in the kindergarten’s bay window is intact and in good condition.

This photo captures the entire length of the main first floor corridor. Hallways feature a combination of CMU and glazed block, with green glazed tile accents.

The south stair features painted steel panel railings.

Half and One-Mile Radius



Neighborhood By The Numbers

19/100

Walkscore
Car-dependent

0.7 mi

Transit Access
10-15 minute walk to nearest
DDOT Connect Ten or Key Route

0.7 mi

Freeway Access
Less than 5 minute drive
to nearest freeway ramp

0.1 mi

Park Access
10-15 minute walk
to nearest park (1+ acre)

1.9 mi

Nearest Recreation Center
No City Rec Center
within walking distance

2.3 mi

Library Access
No public library
within walking distance

1%

Vacant/DLBA Property
Very low rate of vacancy
within 0.25 mile radius (2020)

59

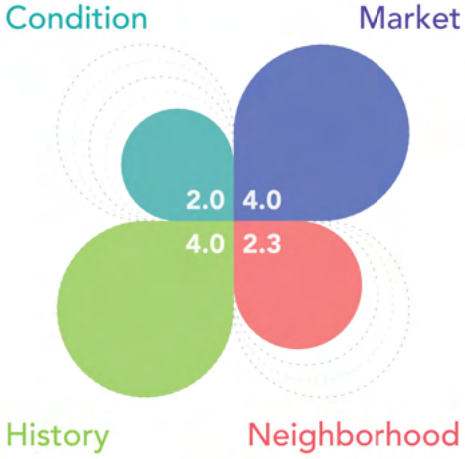
Building Alteration Permits
Low construction activity
within 1mi radius (2016-2018)

2.8%

Senior Population Growth
Moderate projected growth
within 1mi radius (2019-2024)

1 Holcomb

Address: 18100 Bentler
Parcel: 22110670.001
District: 1
SNF Area: Northwest/Grand River
Owner: City of Detroit
Site Area: 4.42 ac
Gross Floor Area: 44,200 sf
Floors: 1
Plan Type: 8
School Type: Elementary
Year Built: 1925, 1928, 1948
Zoned: R1
Base Rehab Cost (est): $1.1M
Total Rehab Cost (est): $10.0M



Building Overview

Single-story double-courtyard layout.

Original 1920s wings feature traditional Collegiate Gothic exterior, with plaster and lathe interior finishes and wood-framed windows (metal replacement windows have been scrapped).

1948 addition is modern style, with painted/glazed concrete block finishes and glass block and steel-frame ribbon windows (scrapped). Modern portion concealed behind 1920s wings and not visible from the street.

Library and art room in 1925 unit feature 16' high ceilings and large bay windows.

Auditorium is in excellent condition, and featuring Pewabic Tile accents and decorative concrete block detailing.

Former north entrance converted to kitchen serving gym/cafeteria.

Building requires new roof and has been damaged by scrappers. Central cupola/tower removed.

Large, wooded site in center of block, bounded on three sides by single-family residential lots. Only one street frontage (west).

Neighborhood Overview

Located in Holcomb Comunity neighborhood in far northwest Detroit.

Residential blocks in immediate area are primarily small, 1-1.5 story single-family homes, with high rates of vacancy. Adjacent neighborhoods are more stable, with higher density.

Two blocks from Old Redford area, and within walking distance of historic business district at Lahser Rd and Grand River Ave. This area has a traditional main street feel and includes a classic movie theater and a number of successful local businesses.

Within half mile of Crowell Rec Center, and DPL Redford Branch Library.

Within half mile of Meijer grocery store/supercenter.

Community preference for senior housing at this site.

Key node on proposed neighborhood arts loop connecting with Artist Village in Old Redford, and Lahser Clarita Park.

Development Overview

Opportunities

- SNF Priority Project
- Located near thriving Old Redford commercial node
- Can be easily modified to be ADA accessible.
- Tactical preservation candidate

Challenges

- Sprawling layout multiplies roof and facade repair costs.
- Contrasting architectural/ construction styles
- Limited site access

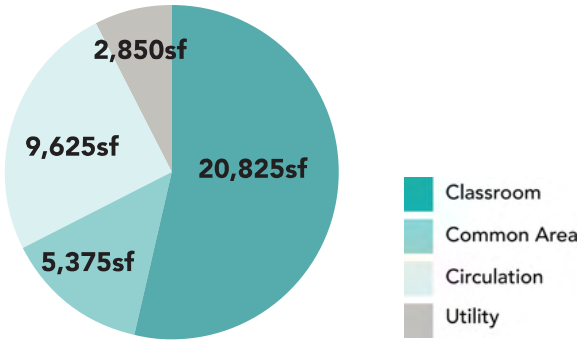
Real Estate Market summary:
(1-mi radius, compared against subset of 39 City-owned vacant schools)

- Multifamily: Above Average
- Retail: Above Average
- Office: Below Average
- Industrial: Below Average

Market-based Use Recommendations

- Best market for senior housing due to low existing supply, high rent, and above average projected senior population growth.

Existing Floorplan + Program



38,675 sf net floor area

Structure
- Load-bearing masonry perimeter (Brick/CMU)
- Steel columns (interior corridors)

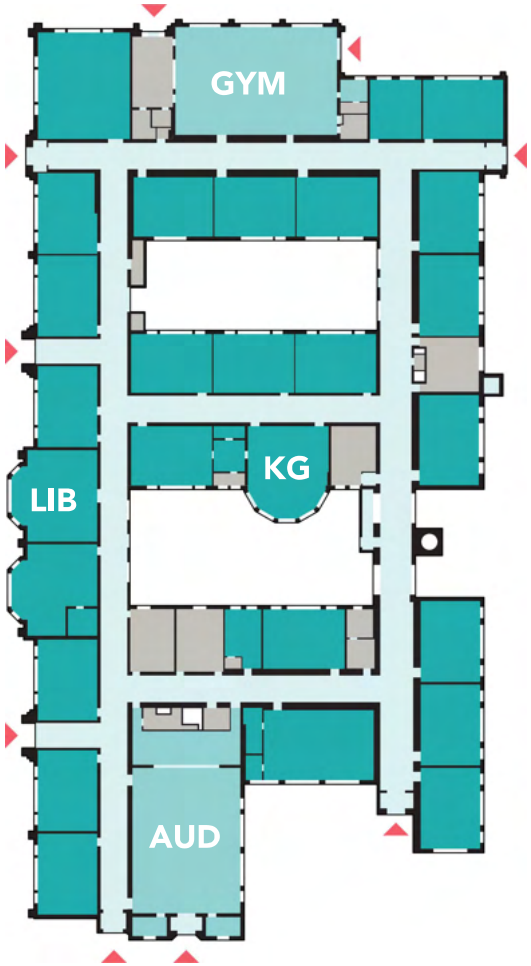
Roof System:
- Wood deck with steel frame and asphalt shingle (1920s steep-slope)
- Wood deck and timber frame, bituminous built-up-roof (1920s low-slope)
- Built-up-roof with unknown construction (1948 low-slope)

Floor System:
- Concrete slab on grade

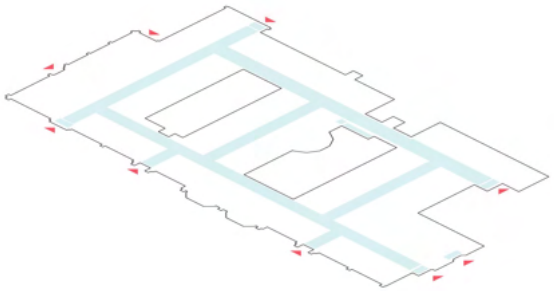
Facade:
- Brick with limestone/cast stone accents
- Wood frame windows (1920s)
- Glass block with operable steel lites (1948)

Interior Walls:
- Plaster and lathe (1920s), painted CMU (1948)

First Floor

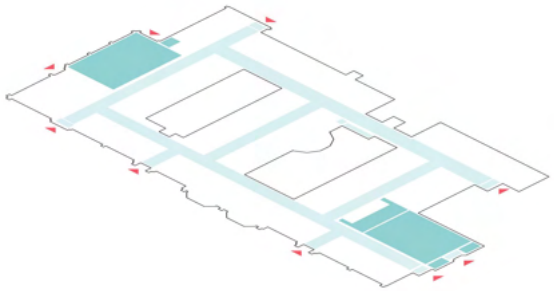


Existing Floorplan + Program



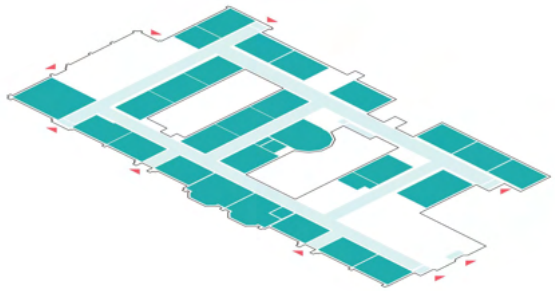
Circulation

Holcomb has two long single-loaded corridors on the east and west sides of the building, connected by three double-loaded corridors. The four primary entrances to the school are located along the original west corridor; there are secondary entrances on the south and east side of the school. Most of the corridors are 9’10” wide and 9’10” tall, with the exception of the southeast corridor in the 1948 addition, which is 11’7” wide.



Common Areas

The gym is located at the north end in the 1928 addition, while the auditorium is located at the south end in the 1948 addition. Both spaces are approximately 40x60’ with 16’ ceilings. Both spaces have dedicated exterior access.



Classroom Areas

Classrooms are arranged around the perimeter of the building and facing the internal courtyards. There are 20 standard 22x30’ classrooms, as well as five larger specialty rooms, including library, kindergarten, and arts rooms. Typical ceiling heights are 11’6” to 12’0, though the art room and library have towering 16’ ceilings.

Building Distress

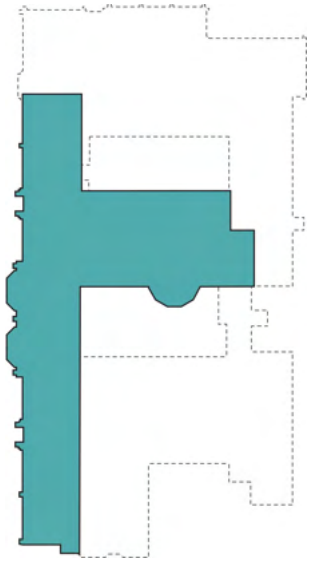
Roof

- Cupola missing; unknown if stolen or removed for safekeeping during temporary roof patching work.

First Floor

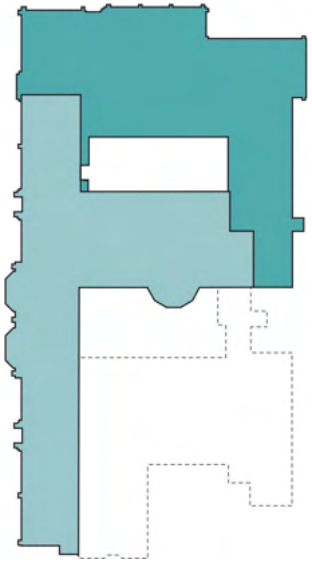
- Localized water damage, primarily at corners and protruding areas of building.
- Pooled water on floor in northwest corner; potential source failed roof drain?
- Windows scrapped throughout.

Building Evolution



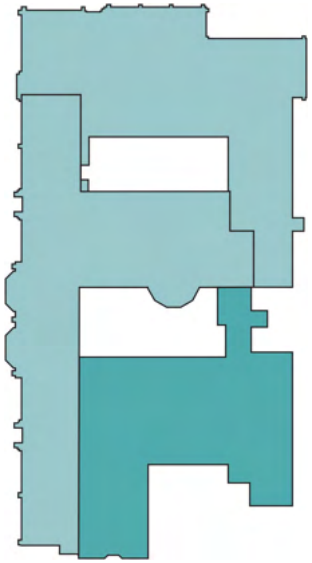
Original Unit (1925)

The original school building was an unusual T-plan, with a long single-loaded west wing forming the primary street frontage, and a short, double-loaded classroom and kindergarten wing extending toward the rear of the site.



First Addition (1928)

In 1928, an L-shaped wing was added to the north end of the site, creating an interior courtyard. The addition included a gym, eight standard classrooms, and a large specialty classroom.



Second Addition (1948)

The southern end of the school was expanded in 1948, in a completely different architectural style. This wing created a second enclosed courtyard. The southern addition included an auditorium, and five more classrooms.

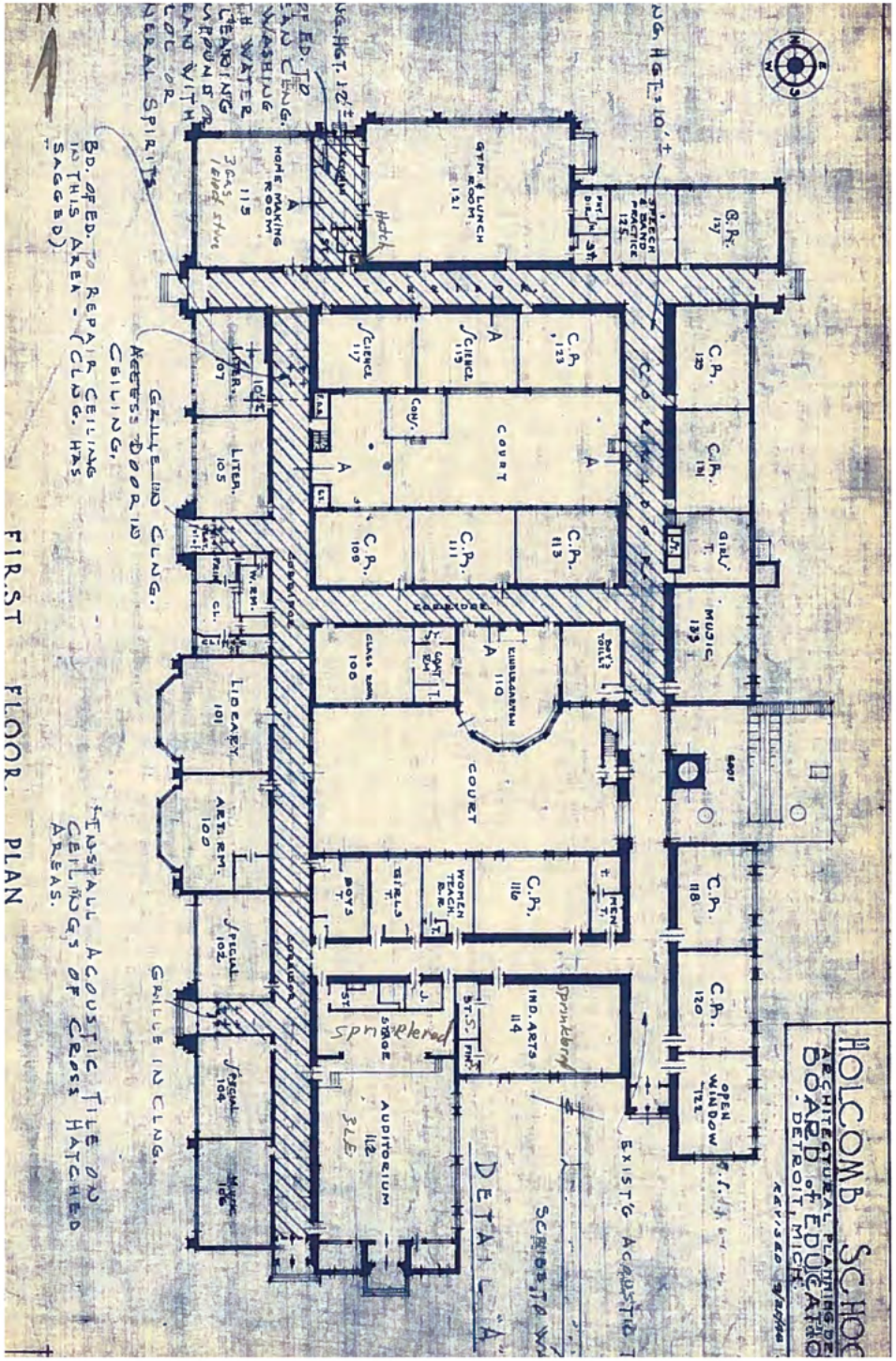
School History

Samuel D. Holcomb School
Samuel D. Holcomb School was founded in September 1925 with the construction of a single-story school building. Although many of Redford Union's elementary schools, such as Mettetal, Coffey, and Hubert Schools (all of which were also built in1925), consisted of smaller buildings constructed in then-remote parts of the township, Holcomb School was located in Redford's commercial and residential center, the village of Redford. As such, it was designed from the start as a thirteen-room school building--larger than a typical township school, though still not approaching the size of most Detroit schools of the time. It was originally established to serve District #1 of Redford Union Schools, but was absorbed by the school system of the rapidly growing City of Detroit prior to the start of the 1926-1927 school year. Holcomb School originally served an area bounded by McNichols, Grand River, Berg, Seven Mile, and Evergreen Roads. It was named in honor of a physician and longtime resident of Redford. A library and kindergarten were included in this initial unit, vocational and "Domestic Arts" courses for residents of the surrounding area were provided in a temporary structure located on the site.

As the area's population continued to grow, a second unit, featuring six additional classrooms, a lunchroom, and a gymnasium, was added in April 1929, allowing the capacity of the school to exceed one thousand students. This was quickly followed by another temporary classroom building, though economic conditions delayed the erection of a permanent addition to the building until 1946, when a third unit added five additional classrooms, an auditorium, a shop, and more restrooms, at a cost of $442,335,00.

Although the original architect of Holcomb School is not known, the township school districts acted independently in their hiring of architects, adding more variety to the Detroit system once annexed. This attractive, single-story building came to be known for its pleasant setting, and a 1938 account of the site describes “flowers, garden paths, and a miniature pool...the advantages of the country woodside brought to [a] city school doorstep". Building permits identify Raymond Carey as the architect of the building's second unit; he possibly designed the initial unit as well. In 1949, the Boston Tile Company supervised the installation of a Pewabic tile drinking fountain in Holcomb School, matching that of the city's Frederick Schulze School.

Excerpted from United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Draft). Holcolmb, Samuel B., School. Boscarino, T., City of Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board (2009).



1st Floor Plan
(not to scale)

Primary west elevation, featuring symmetrical design anchored by double-bay windows.

Auditorium is in excellent condition and features simple details like Pewabic Tile accents and decorative concrete blocks. The auditorium is accessible through a dedicated entrance at the rear.

The library (pictured) and next-door art room feature towering ceilings. These rooms occupy the central bay windows visible on the main elevation.

The kindergarten bay window extends into an interior courtyards. The kindergarten is one three classrooms that featured direct courtyard access.

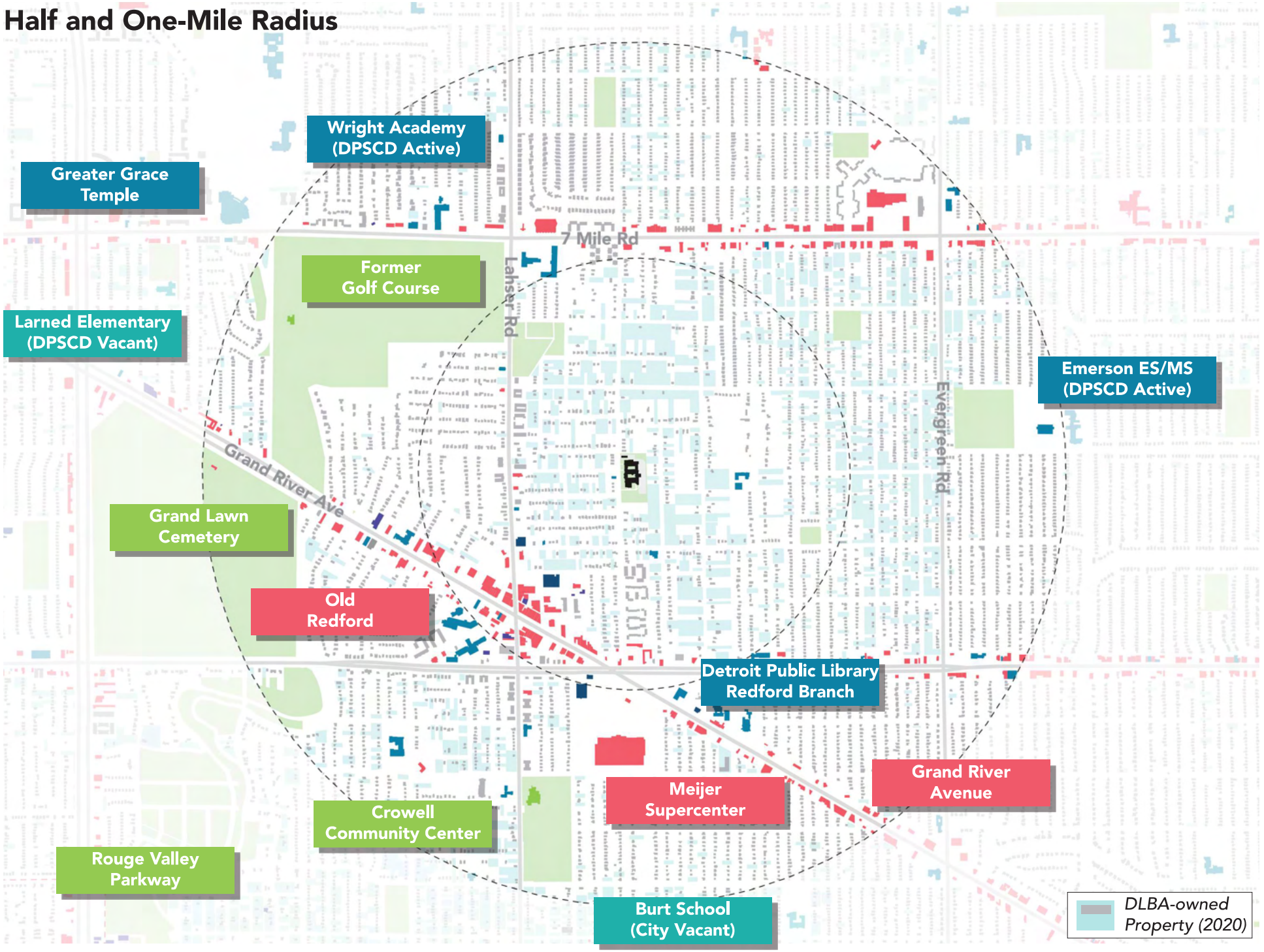
The long, west corridor, part of the original 1925 building. Lockers have been scrapped, but the plaster finishes are in relatively good condition.

The homemaking room is a large square on the northwest corner, with windows on two sides.

The gym/cafeteria gym looking towards the serving window. The current kitchen is a later update that occupies what was formerly the north entrance vestibule.

The large industrial arts classroom in the modern 1948 wing. Classrooms in this wing feature large glass-block windows and painted CMU walls.

Half and One-Mile Radius



Neighborhood By The Numbers

52/100

Walkscore
Somewhat walkable

0.3mi

Transit Access
5-10 minute walk to nearest
DDOT Connect Ten or Key Route

2.1mi

Freeway Access
5-10 minute drive
to nearest freeway ramp

0.3mi

Park Access
10-15 minute walk
to nearest park (1+ acre)

0.7mi

Nearest Recreation Center
10-15 minute walk
to nearest City Rec Center

0.5mi

Library Access
10-15 minute walk
to nearest public library

45%

Vacant/DLBA Property
High rate of vacancy
within 0.25 mile radius (2020)

181

Building Alteration Permits
Moderate construction activity
within 1mi radius (2016-2018)

2.4%

Senior Population Growth
Moderate projected growth
within 1mi radius (2019-2024)

Financial Analysis Summary

Holcomb Elementary School is in the Grandriver Northwest SNF area. The building is located at 18100 Bentler St. in the Old Redford neighborhood in District 1. It is almost six miles away from the JLG but near the NW Grandriver McNichols commercial corridor. Total residential population in 2019 was approximately 16,400 and 2019-2024 projected annual population growth rate is -0.4%. However, the senior population annual growth rate is projected at 2.4%. According to EMSI, 2019 estimated median household income for the area was $30,000.

Holcomb's built environment is slightly less dense than other schools in the Vacant School portfolio, with 3.8 million sf. However, permit activity is above average, with approximately 180 new construction and alterations permits recorded from 2016-2018, according to City of Detroit data. Permit data if viewed as proxy for activity and investment, could indicate positive future trends and other development in the area. Fisher scored a Walkscore of 52, 'somewhat walkable' – some errands can be accomplished on foot (Walkscore).

Owner-occupied housing units are expected to grow marginally at 0.1% annually (EMSI). In terms of multifamily development, the area has over 1 million sf of market rate multifamily development according to CoStar and an above-average amount of number of HRD units at approximately 1,300. This is almost twice the average number of HRD units across the schools profile. Market rate rents as recorded by CoStar are $14 psf or $720 per unit on average. Recorded average vacancy in the 1-mile radius around Holcomb was low, at 5%. Holcomb also has one senior living building with 160,000 sf, and average rents of $21 psf or $1,100 per unit and vacancy of 5.4%.

Holcomb is near the NW Grandriver McNichols commercial corridor featured in the 2018 Detroit Neighborhood Retail Opportunity Study. The 1-mile radius area around Holcomb contains an above average amount of retail compared to other schools in the portfolio, including six grocery stores, and slightly better than average retail rents and vacancy rates, approximately $14 psf and 1% vacancy (EMSI / CoStar). Holcomb outperforms in terms of retail sales, with $152 million annually, compared to an expected value of $135 million given its local population. This indicates that people travel from outside the 1-mile radius to shop in the neighborhoods around Holcomb, a good sign for neighborhood vibrancy and economic activity. Holcomb redevelopment scenarios may benefit from including auxiliary retail as part of the project.

There are 12 buildings categorized as commercial office in Holcomb's 1-mile radius according to CoStar, with slightly lower than average rents ($12 psf) and 4% average vacancy rates. There are 7 buildings categorized as industrial according to CoStar, with average rents ($4 psf). Vacancy averages approximately 22%.

From Profile Recommendation: *Recommended for Senior Housing because 1 existing building with average Senior Housing vacancy rate, very high rents at $21, and above-average senior population growth projections.*

Market Information

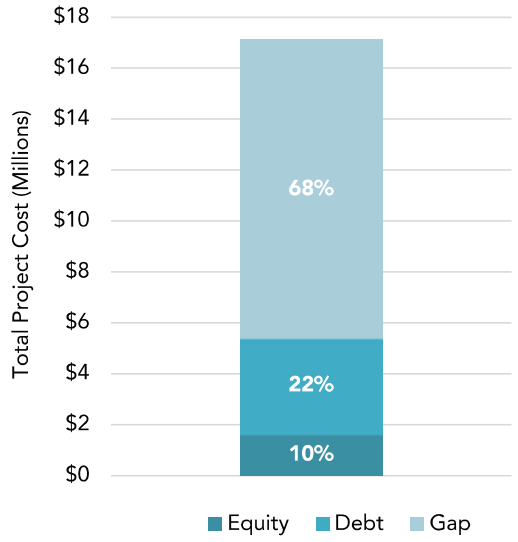
Holcomb 1

Development Type	Gross Area (SF)
Rehabilitated Structure	41,381
Demolished Structure	2,792

Income (PSF values)	
Blended Rental Income	$9.50
Less Vacancy	$0.50
Less Expense	$1.00
2022 NOI (escalated)	$8.00
Blended Cap Rate	8.0%
Capped NOI	$100
Total Value	**$4,100,000**

High Level Funding Breakdown		
Equity	$1.71	10%
Debt	$3.72	22%
Gap	$11.69	68%
Total Project Cost	**$17.12**	

2022 Costs	
Total Rehab Cost	$10,000,000
Total Fit-Out Cost	$7,100,000
Total Project Cost	**$17,100,000**
Gap	**$ 11,700,000**



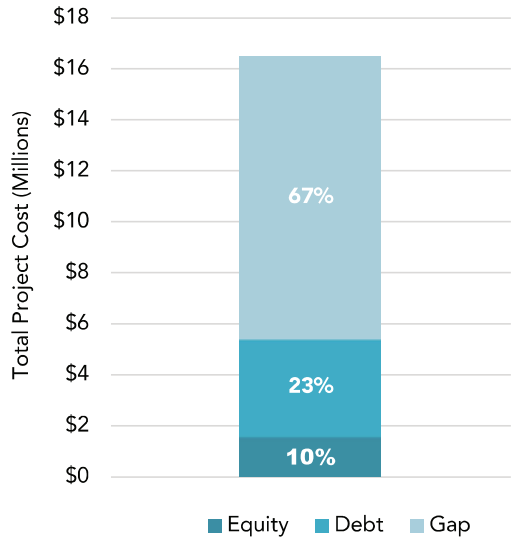
Holcomb 2

Development Type	Gross Area (SF)
Rehabilitated Structure	41,380
Demolished Structure	2,793

Income (PSF values)	
Blended Rental Income	$10.50
Less Vacancy	$0.50
Less Expense	$1.50
2022 NOI (escalated)	$8.50
Blended Cap Rate	8.4%
Capped NOI	$103
Total Value	**$4,300,000**

High Level Funding Breakdown		
Equity	$1.65	10%
Debt	$3.83	23%
Gap	$11.05	67%
Total Project Cost	**$16.54**	

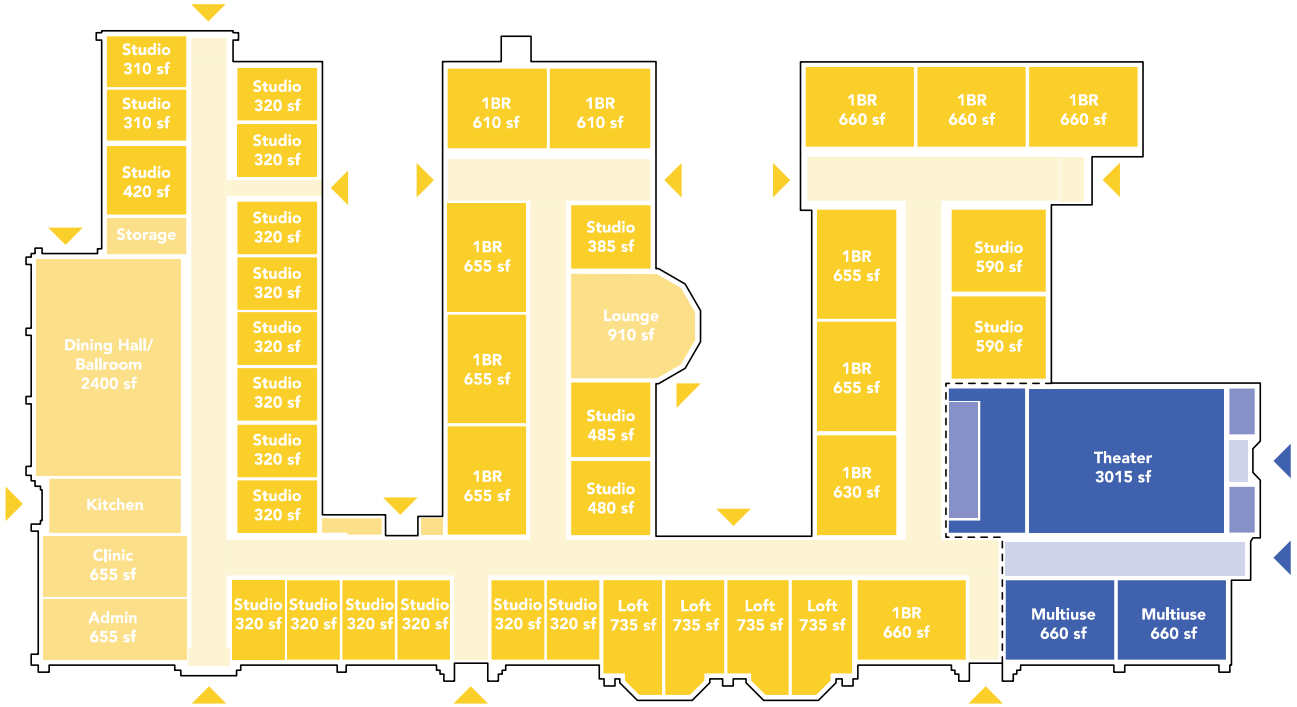
2022 Costs	
Total Rehab Cost	$10,000,000
Total Fit-Out Cost	$6,500,000
Total Project Cost	**$16,500,000**
Gap	**$ 11,100,000**



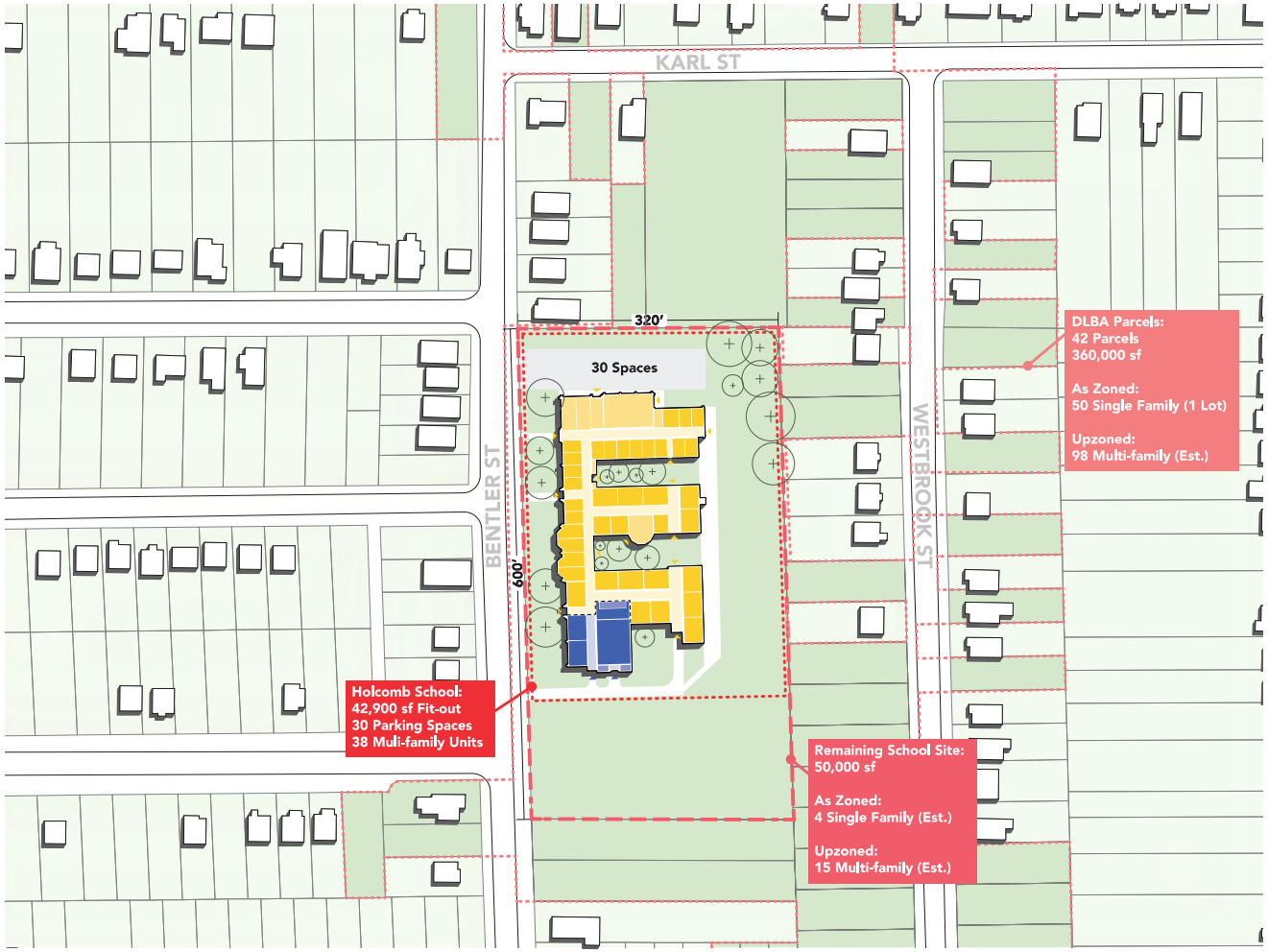
Scenario 1: Senior Housing

Open courtyards and a community theater

Holcomb has a single-level layout, making it a good candidate for housing seniors with limited mobility. This scenario opens up the two central courtyards and creates additional access points by demolishing two classrooms at the rear (east) elevation of the building. The scenario includes a combination of small senior studios and larger one-bedroom apartments. The existing gym is reused as a communal dining hall, while the theater is split off from the housing portion of the building, and operated independently as a community-focused cultural space.



First Floor



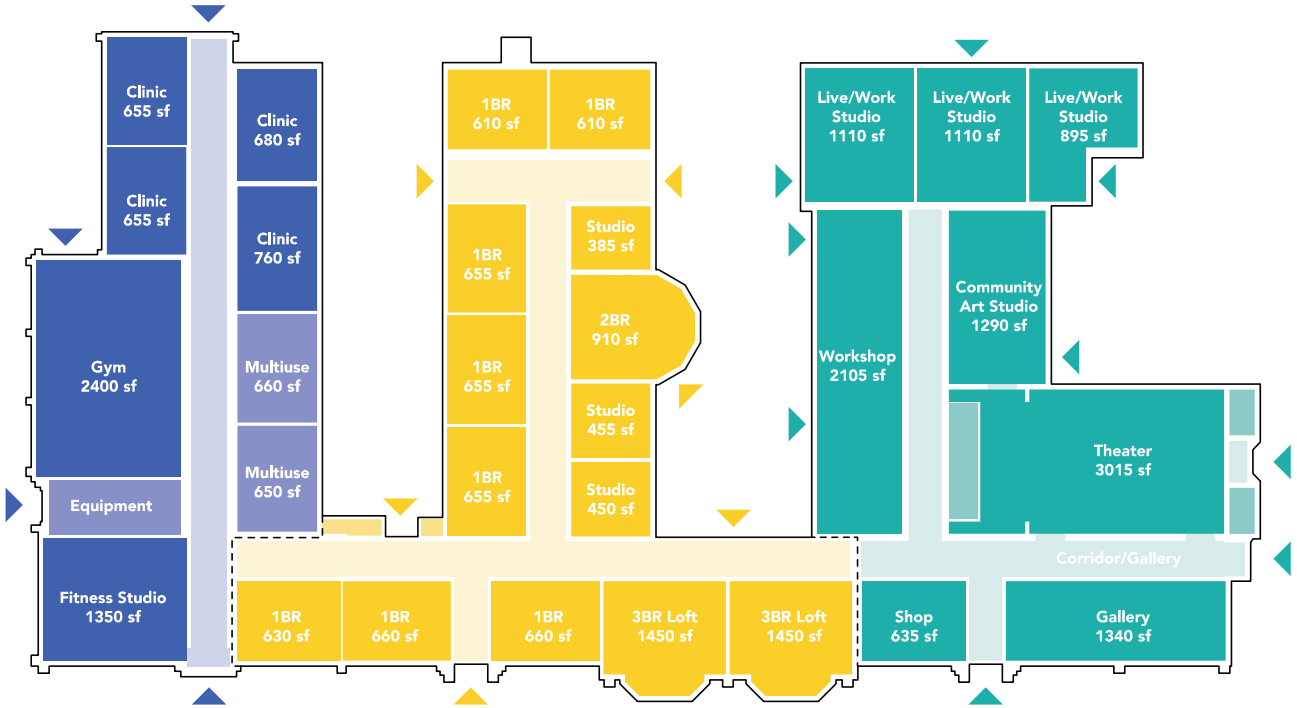
Studio (320 - 385 sf)	18
Studio (480 - 590sf)	4
1BR Lofts (735 sf)	4
1BR (630 - 660 sf)	12
TOTAL UNITS	38

Program	Building Type	Finish Type	Area %	Gross Area (SF)	Volume (CU FT)	Unit Cost	Subtotal Cost
Senior Housing	Plaster w/ Conc Structure	Historic	62%	27,375		166	$ 4,544,219.61
Senior Housing	CMU w/ Conc Structure	Contemp	18%	8,165		150	$ 1,224,777.09
Community Center	CMU w/ Conc Structure	Historic	8%	3,583		159	$ 569,763.70
Community Center	Plaster w/ Conc Structure	Historic	5%	2,257		153	$ 345,339.39
Demolition			6%	2,792		11	$ 30,717.09
Parking						12000	$ 360,000.00
Developed Area (GFA)				**41,381**			
Fit-out subtotal							**$ 7,074,816.87**
Rehab subtotal							**$10,047,497.79**
COST TOTAL							**$ 17,122,314.66**

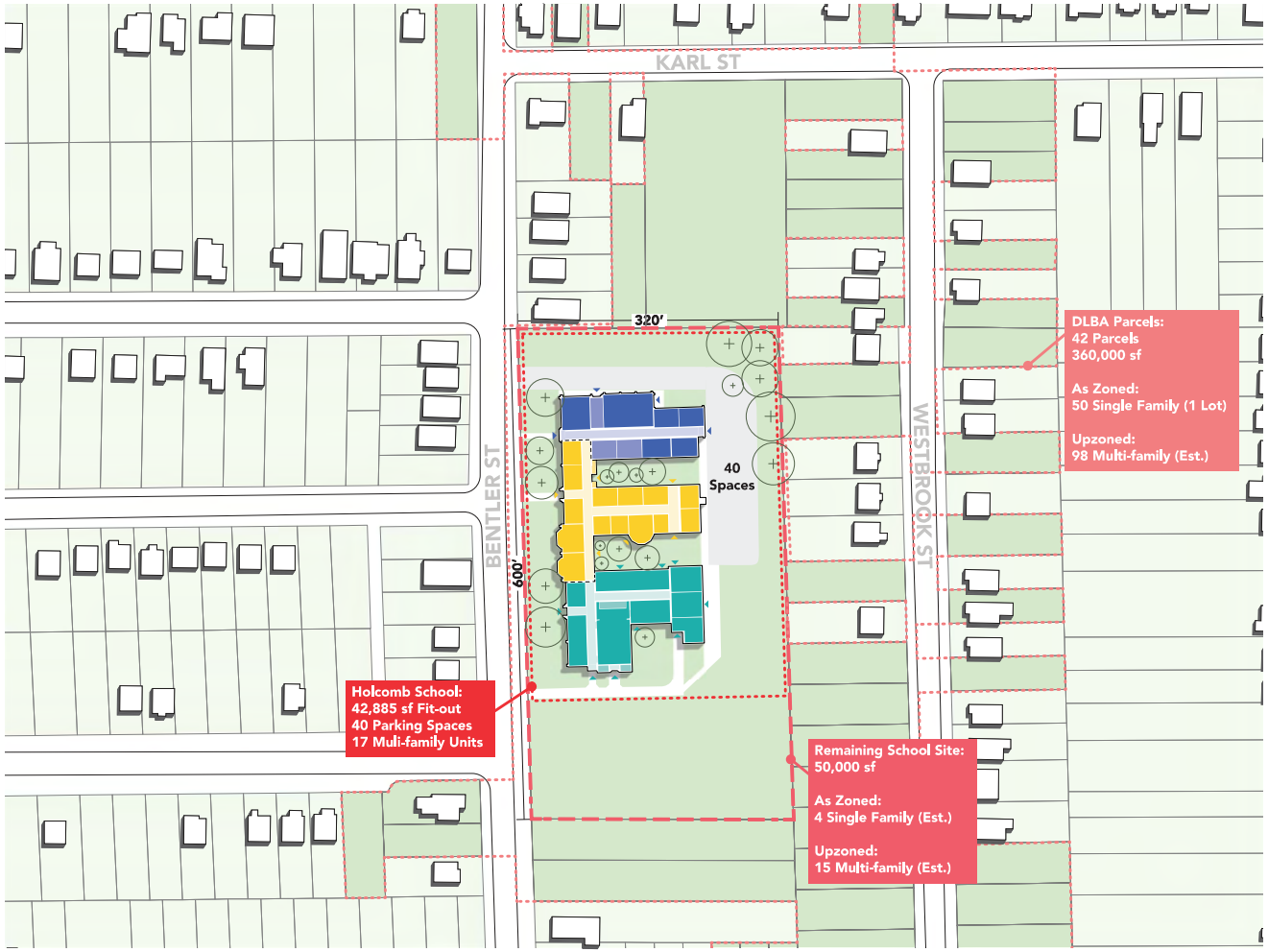
Scenario 2: Arts, Health, & Housing

Activate 3 wings

This scenario opens up the two central courtyards and creates three distinct wings by demolishing two classrooms at the rear (east) elevation of the building. Each wing can be redeveloped and operated separately from the others; the rehab could take place simultaneously or in phases. Housing occupies the smaller, historic classroom spaces in the central wing. The modern-construction south wing and theater are repurposed as community art space and live-work studios. The historic north wing, with gym and large corner activity room are reimagined as a community wellness hub.



First Floor



Studio (385 - 450 sf)	3
1 BR (610 - 660 sf)	8
2 BR (910 sf)	1
3 BR Loft (1450 sf)	2
Live/Work Studio (895-1110sf)	3
TOTAL UNITS	17

Program	Building Type	Finish Type	Area %	Gross Area (SF)	Volume (CU FT)	Unit Cost	Subtotal Cost
Affordable Housing	Plaster w/ Conc Structure	Historic	33%	14,531		153	$ 2,223,297.14
Affordable Housing (Live/	CMU w/ Conc Structure	Raw	8%	3,551		120	$ 426,098.66
Community Center	CMU w/ Conc Structure	Raw	19%	8,192		120	$ 983,037.40
Community Center	Plaster w/ Conc Structure	Historic	8%	3,647		153	$ 558,038.72
Healthcare	Plaster w/ Conc Structure	Contemp	26%	11,458		156	$ 1,787,472.31
Demolition			6%	2,793		11	$ 30,727.16
Parking						12000	$ 480,000.00
Developed Area (GFA)				**41,380**			
Fit-out subtotal							**$ 6,488,671.40**
Rehab subtotal							**$10,047,497.79**
COST TOTAL							**$ 16,536,169.19**

1 Hubert

Address: 14825 Lamphere
Parcel: 22116545-9
District: 1
SNF Area: n/a
Owner: City of Detroit
Site Area: 6.28 ac
Floor Area: 60,000 sf
Floors: 2
Plan Type: F
School Type: Elementary
Year Built: 1925, 1926, 1930, 1953
Zoned: R1
Base Rehab Cost (est): $2.6M
Total Rehab Cost (est): $14.5M

Condition Market

History Neighborhood

Building Overview

Large, eclectic building consisting of multiple additions from different eras.

1920s-1930s era north units form a single-story, asymmetrical "A" plan with an enclosed courtyard.

1950s era south unit is a two-story double-loaded bar.

Each unit has different architectural style and structural system.

Building features multiple large shared spaces, including large and small auditoriums, large and small gym/ play rooms, and several large specialty classrooms.

Very large, park-like play yard at lower grade than rest of school.

Roof damage and severe water infiltration in older north units.

Neighborhood Overview

Located in Brightmoor neighborhood

Single-family residential neighborhood with large number of vacancies and demolitions.

Brightmoor neighborhood has recently attracted artists, farmers, and community activists.

Adjacent to Brightmoor Farmway, with a number of urban gardens and community organizations clustered along Chalfonte.

Two blocks south of Fenkell, which includes a small number of restaurants, auto-oriented businesses, churches, and social support organizations.

Located near Eliza Howell Park.

Development Overview

Opportunities

- Potential candidate for tactical preservation or incremental activation.
- Multiple wings could be activated separately
- Diverse mix of spaces could accommodate mixed housing and community project.
- Proximity to farms and food-based community organizations.

Challenges

- Sprawling building in need of extensive repairs.
- Located in a secluded neighborhood.

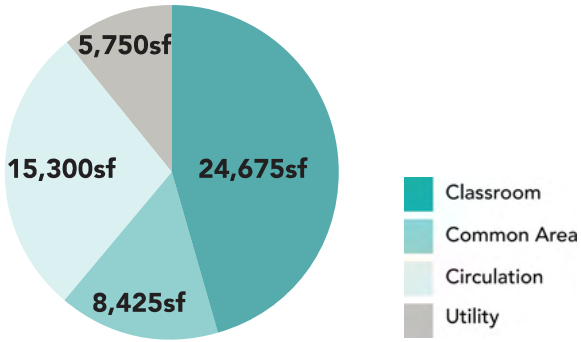
Real Estate Market summary:
(1-mi radius, compared against subset of 39 City-owned vacant schools)

- Multifamily: Average
- Retail: Average
- Office: Below Average
- Industrial: Below Average

Market-based Use Recommendations

- Best market for multifamily or senior housing. Low vacancy rates, high senior housing rent, and above-average senior population growth projection.

Existing Floorplan + Program



54,150 sf net floor area

Structure
- Load-bearing masonry with steel column (1920s)
- Steel frame (1930)
- Concrete frame (1953)

Roof System:
- Wood truss and plank (1920s)
- Precast concrete plank (1930)
- Open-web steel joist with gypsum plank (1953)
- Bituminus built-up roof (low-slope)
- Asphalt shingle (gabled roof)
- Internal drains

Facade:
- Multiwythe brick w/cast stone accent (1920/1930)
- Brick veneer on CMU, w/ cast stone accent (1953)

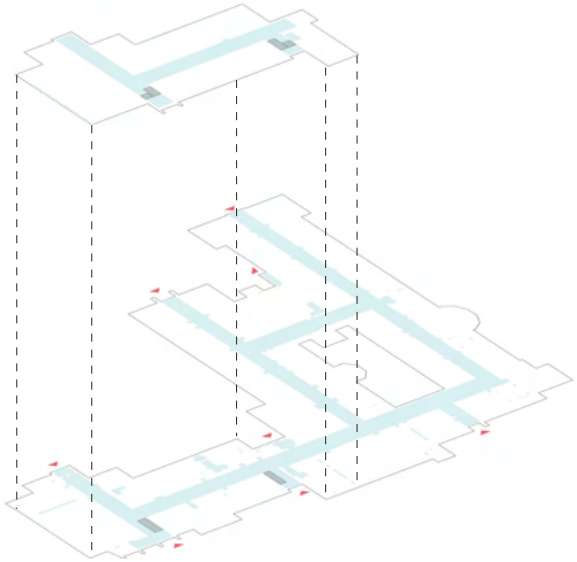
Floor System:
- Concrete joist and slab

Interior Walls:
- Varies: brick, clay tile, gypsum block, CMU, Plaster

Second Floor

First Floor

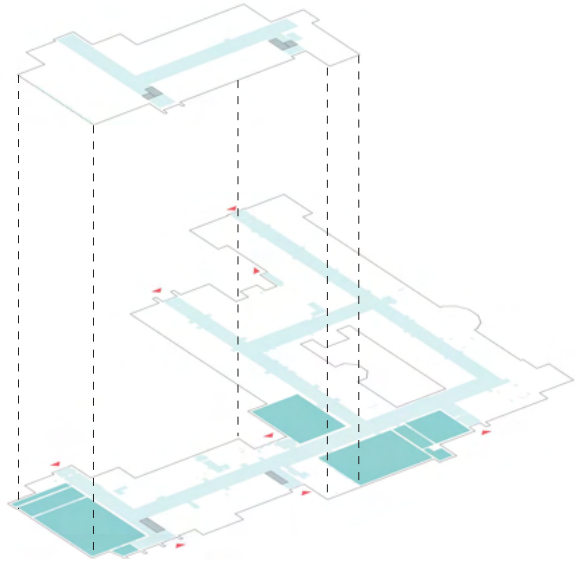
Existing Floorplan + Program



Circulation

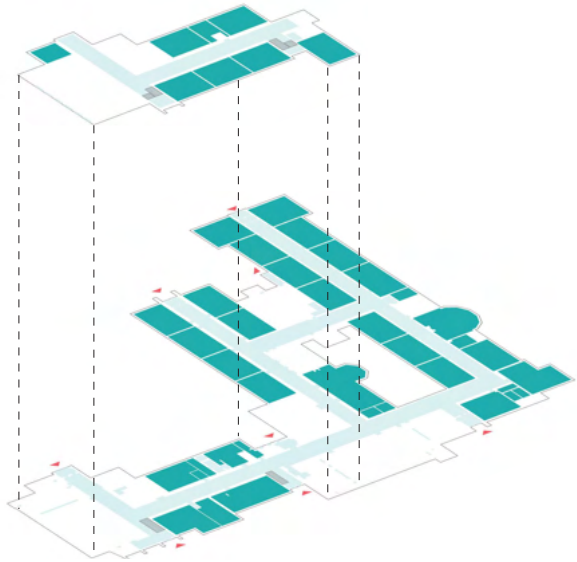
Hubert's corridors are primarily double-loaded and arranged in an irregular F-configuration. Typical corridors are 12' wide, with ceiling heights ranging from 8'8" to 10'8" tall.

Most entrances to the school are located along the long eastern wing, which is the primary street frontage. The two northwest wings have entrances only at their far western ends.



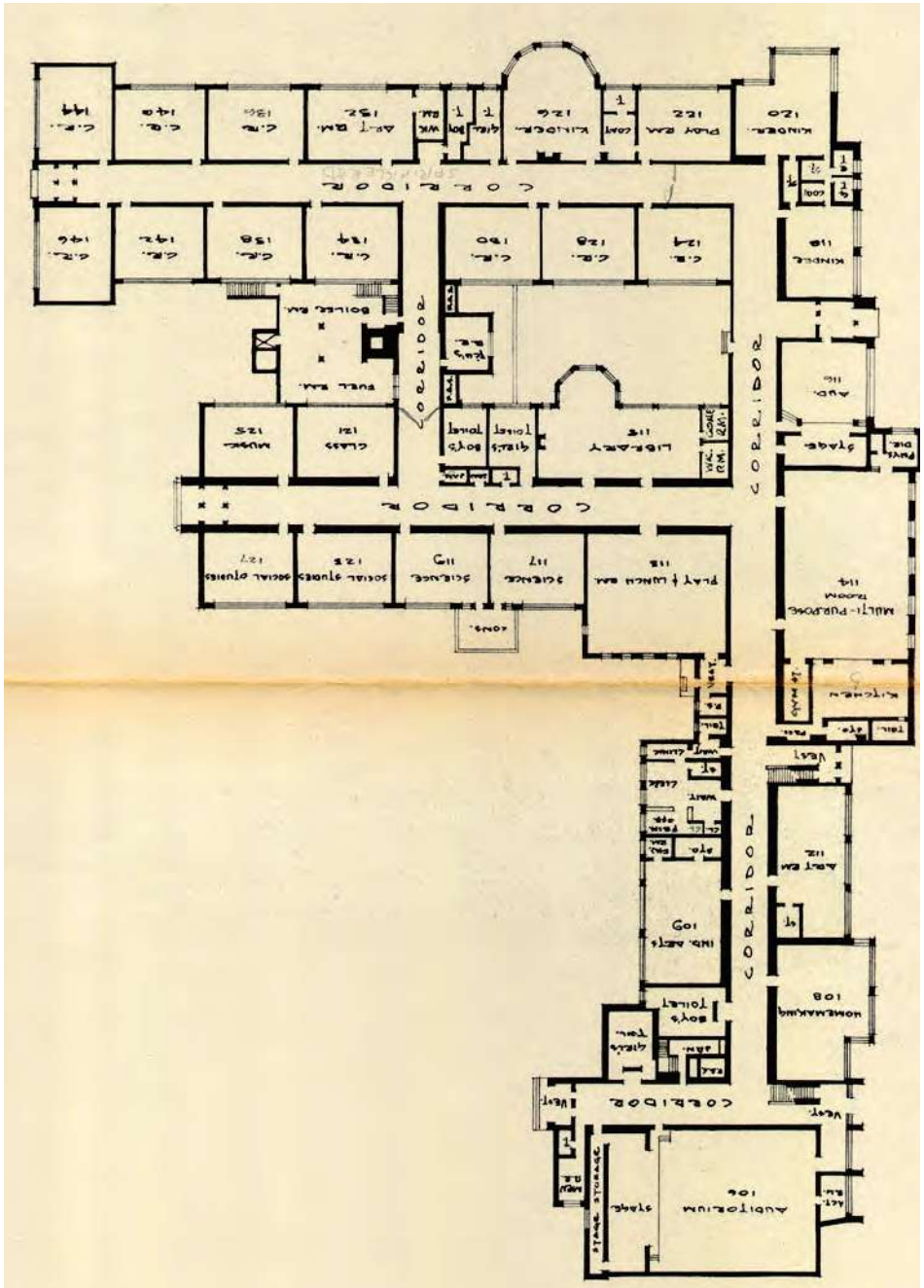
Common Areas

Hubert features a cluster of common areas in the center of the building, including a gym and separate cafeteria built in 1930, and a small auditorium built in 1953. The full-size main auditorium is located at the south end of the building, and was also added in 1953. The main auditorium has a dedicated vestibule and can be accessed from both ends independently from the rest of the school.



Classroom Areas

Classrooms are dispersed throughout the building. In total, there are 25 standard classrooms, a kindergarten and library (both with large bay windows), and four larger specialty rooms. Typical classrooms in the 1920s and 30s units are approximately 22x30' with 12' ceilings in the older wings, and 10'5" ceilings in the 1953 addition.


CORRIDOR
CORRIDOR
CORRIDOR
CORRIDOR
CORRIDOR
LIBRARY 116
PLAY & LUNCH RM. 118
AUDITORIUM 106
MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM 114
KITCHEN
STAGE
HOMEMAKING 108
INDUS. ARTS 109
ART RM 112
SCIENCE 117
SCIENCE 119
SOCIAL STUDIES 123
SOCIAL STUDIES 127
MUSIC 125
CLASS 121
BOILER RM.
FUEL RM.
KINDER. 120
PLAY RM. 122
KINDER. 126
ART RM. 132
C.R. 134
C.R. 136
C.R. 138
C.R. 140
C.R. 142
C.R. 144
C.R. 146
C.R. 148
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C.R. 154
C.R. 156
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C.R. 160
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AUD. 116
STAGE
PLAY GR.
LIBRARY
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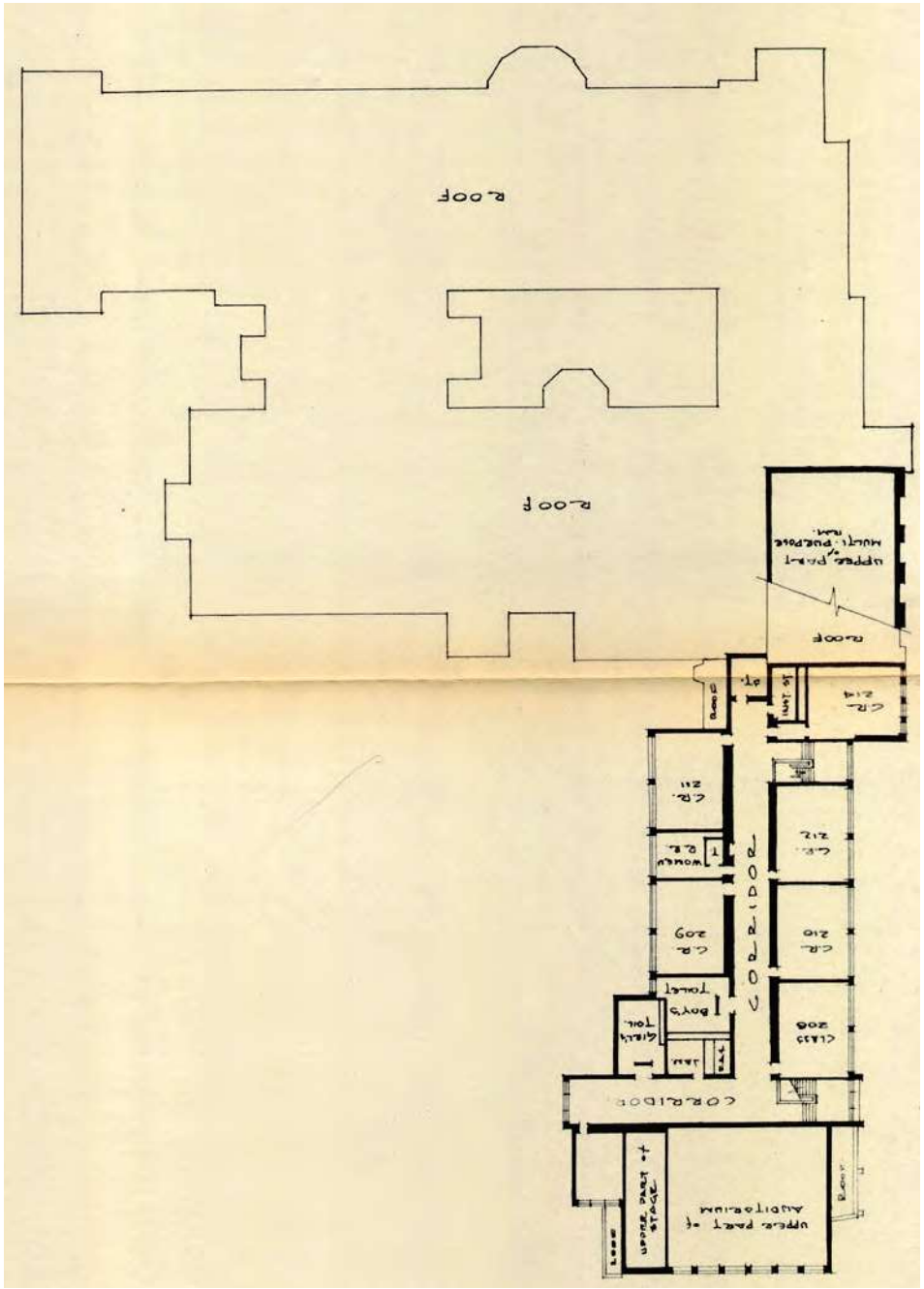
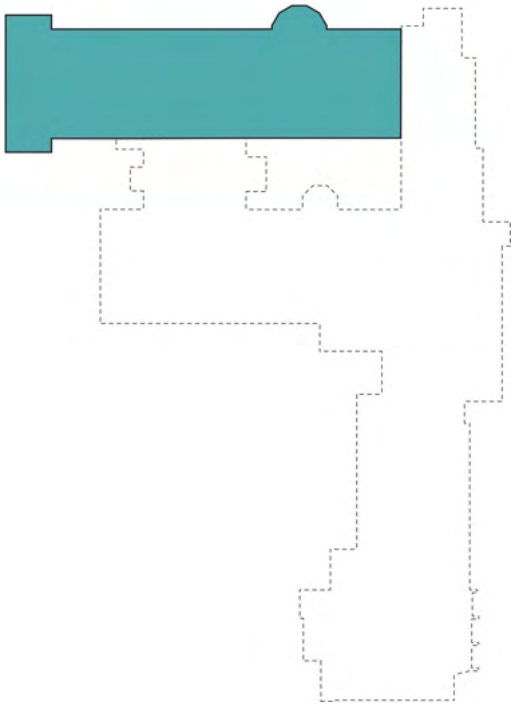
STAGE STORAGE

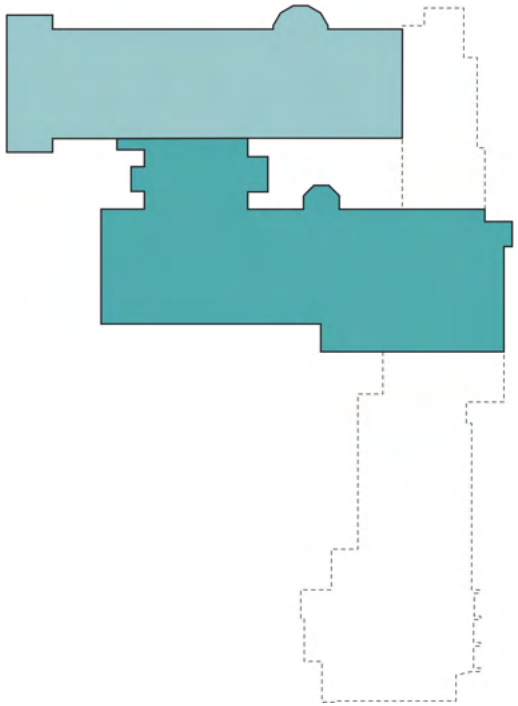

ROOF
ROOF
CORRIDOR
UPPER PART OF AUDITORIUM
UPPER PART OF STAGE
LOWER
AUDITORIUM
MULTI-PURPOSE RM.
ROOF
C.R. 214
C.R. 212
C.R. 210
CLASS 208
C.R. 211
WOMEN'S TOIL.
C.R. 209
BOY'S TOILET
GIRLS' TOIL.
JAN.
CORRIDOR

Building Evolution



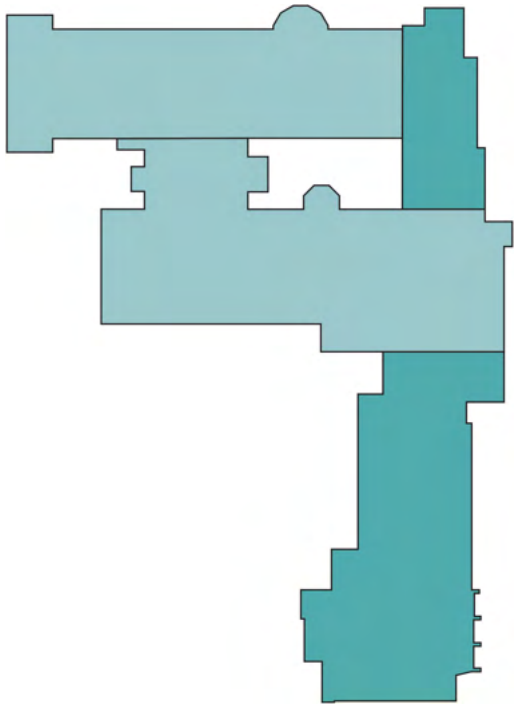
Original Unit (1924-25)

The original school building was a one-story, double-loaded bar building with 12 classrooms and a kindergarten.



First Addition (1930)

In 1930, another double-loaded wing was built parallel to the first, doubling the size of the school. This addition included specialty spaces like a large library, gym, and lunch room, as well as six new classrooms. A large basement-level boiler house was also added connecting the two wings.



Second + Third Additions (1953)

Two additions were completed in 1953. The main addition is a modern-style 2-story classroom wing that added six standard classrooms, three specialty classrooms, and a large auditorium.

A second, smaller addition connected the east ends of the 1925 and 1930 units. This wing included a second, modern-style kindergarten and a small auditorium.

School History

Don Sherman Hubert School

The Redford Union School District erected the Don Sherman Hubert Elementary School's original unit as a one-story, four-room schoolhouse in 1924 at a cost of $189,000. The City of Detroit absorbed the Hubert Elementary School into its system in 1926. At the time the property was transferred to city's ownership, the physical plant sat in poor condition as the school building was closed because the ceiling in the playroom had collapsed. In March of 1926, the Detroit Board of Education funded the rehabilitation of the building, to include the addition of an eight-room wing. A year later, the school system erected new temporary buildings at the site to house 163 pupils.

In 1929-1930, the school system undertook a $4,5393,090 building expansion program which resulted in the addition of a new wing to the Hubert Elementary School. The wing was erected in 1930 at a cost of $165,000 and featured a gymnasium, library, lunchroom, and seven additional classrooms. The new unit accommodated an additional 480 students and allowed the school to grow into an 18-section platoon. Shortly thereafter, the school shifted to a 20-section platoon plan to accommodate a capacity of nearly 1,000 students. The 1930s also witnessed the establishment of the Rayner Stewart Garden within the school's parcel. The garden was tended by the school children and included flowers and vegetables and, at the time, was lauded as one-of-a-kind within the Detroit Public School system. An $8,215,288 grant to the Detroit Board of Education from the Public Works Administration (a New Deal era federal construction agency) provided $70,000 towards the improvement of the building in 1938.

In the years immediately following the close of World War II, the neighborhood experienced an influx of young families and the construction of hundreds of new single-family homes in the area. In 1953, the Detroit Board of Education erected a new addition to the Hubert School at cost of $914,000, increasing the school's capacity by 665 pupils to accommodate population growth within the neighborhood. The new addition included an auditorium, six new classrooms, two art rooms, two kindergartens, a multi-purpose room, and offices. E.A. Schilling Inc. served as the project's architect. At this time the building's older wings were also the subject of a major interior remodeling. Starting in 1959, the building temporarily housed a junior high school, and continued to do so for a number of years.

On April 6, 1970, white parents initiated a boycott of four schools (Arthur Junior High, Murphy Junior High, Goodale Elementary, and Hubert Elementary) to protest the school board's decision to require that students from the predominantly white Arthur Junior High School attend the predominantly black Kettering High School in order to support a "balance" within the high school which better reflected the district's student racial makeup at the time. On that day, only a quarter of Hubert's student body attended class as a result of the action. The boycott reflected the sentiment of a segment of the City's white residents towards the School Board's larger decentralization plan, which was adopted on April 7, 1970 and sought to integrate 11 of its 22 high schools via the bussing of graduating black junior high students to predominately white high schools and graduating white junior high students to predominantly black high schools. This plan represented the Detroit Board of Education's shift towards a more racially-diverse membership and progressive desegregation agenda which was born in 1958 with the board's appointment of its first black member, Dr. Remus Richardson. The plan was short lived as the Michigan State Senate passed a bill on July 7, 1970 which forbade changes in school attendance boundaries, thus nullifying

the proposal. Two weeks after this bill was passed, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) filed a school desegregation lawsuit which became known as Milliken v Bradley I. The suit, which named governor William Milliken, the Michigan state attorney general, and the Detroit Board of Education as defendants, became one of the most significant desegregation cases in US history.

The Detroit Public School system, successor to the Detroit Board of Education, successor to the Detroit Board of Education, closed the school in 2005 and subsequently sold the property to the City of Detroit in 2015.

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Additions to Schools Reported. Detroit: Detroit Free Press; Jul 5, 1953; pg. 9

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$4,500,000 School Building Program is Mapped. Detroit: Detroit Free Press; May 26, 1929; pg. 77

Ceiling Falls, Cody Orders School Closed. Detroit: Detroit Free Press; May 13, 1926; pg. 1

Grant, William. Detroit Free Press. Racial Changes Prompt Boycott of 4 Schools. Detroit: Detroit Free Press; Tue, Apr 7, 1970; pgs. 3-4

Grover, John and Yvette van der Velde. A School District In Crisis, Detroit Public Schools 1842-2015. https://landgrid.com/reports/schools Loveland Technologies, 2016

The News-Palladium. Four Detroit Schools Are Hit by Protests. Benton Harbor: The News-Palladium; Apr 7, 1970; pg. 8

Traverse City Record-Eagle. Angry Parents Pickett Schools. Traverse City: Traverse City Record-Eagle; Tue, Apr 7, 1970; pg. 6

The main street elevation showing the 1930 gym (on right, with gable roof) and 1953 2-story classroom addition. The 1920s, 1930s, and 1950s units have three different architectural styles.

Original 1925 unit, viewed from the spacious school yard behind the school. The 1-story 1930 expansion is visible to the right of the frame. Damage is visible on the sloped roof.

The 1930 addition included a library with large bay window extending into an interior courtyard.

An original 1925 classroom with water damage and partly missing roof. The school building has extensive damage from water infiltration, as well as scrapping and minor fires.

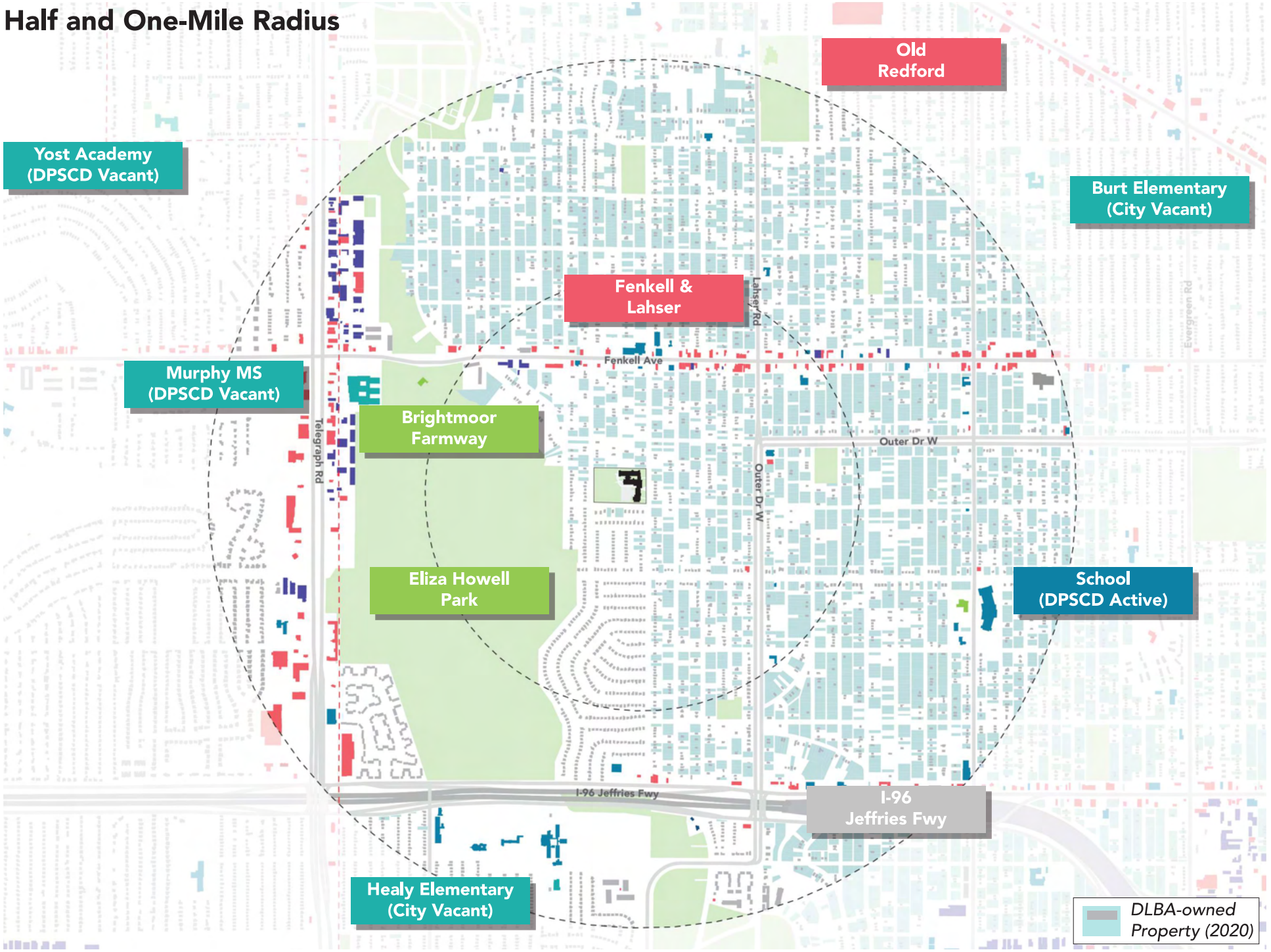
Two auditoriums were added in the 1953 expansions. The large auditorium, shown above, is on the far south end. A small auditorium was added as infill between the 1925 and 1930 units.

The large multipurpose gym/cafeteria was added in 1930. The space features tall 18′ ceilings and has a large attached kitchen.

This corner classroom in the 1953 unit displays the modern glass block and steel ribbon windows common of 1950s-era Detroit school buildings.

Two massive boilers sit in the pit-like 1930 boiler room. The boiler room is built partly above grade and has an open roof.

Half and One-Mile Radius



Neighborhood By The Numbers

15/100

Walkscore
Car-dependent

1.2mi

Transit Access
More than 15 minute walk to nearest DDOT Connect Ten or Key Route

0.9mi

Freeway Access
Less than 5 minute drive to nearest freeway ramp

0.1mi

Park Access
Less than 5-minute walk to nearest park (1+ acre)

1.0mi

Nearest Recreation Center
10-15 minute walk to nearest City Rec Center

1.3mi

Library Access
More than 15 minute walk to nearest public library

54%

Vacant/DLBA Property
Very high rate of vacancy within 0.25 mile radius (2020)

53

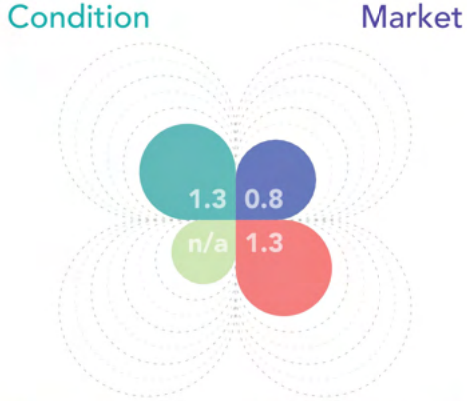
Building Alteration Permits
Low construction activity within 1mi radius (2016-2018)

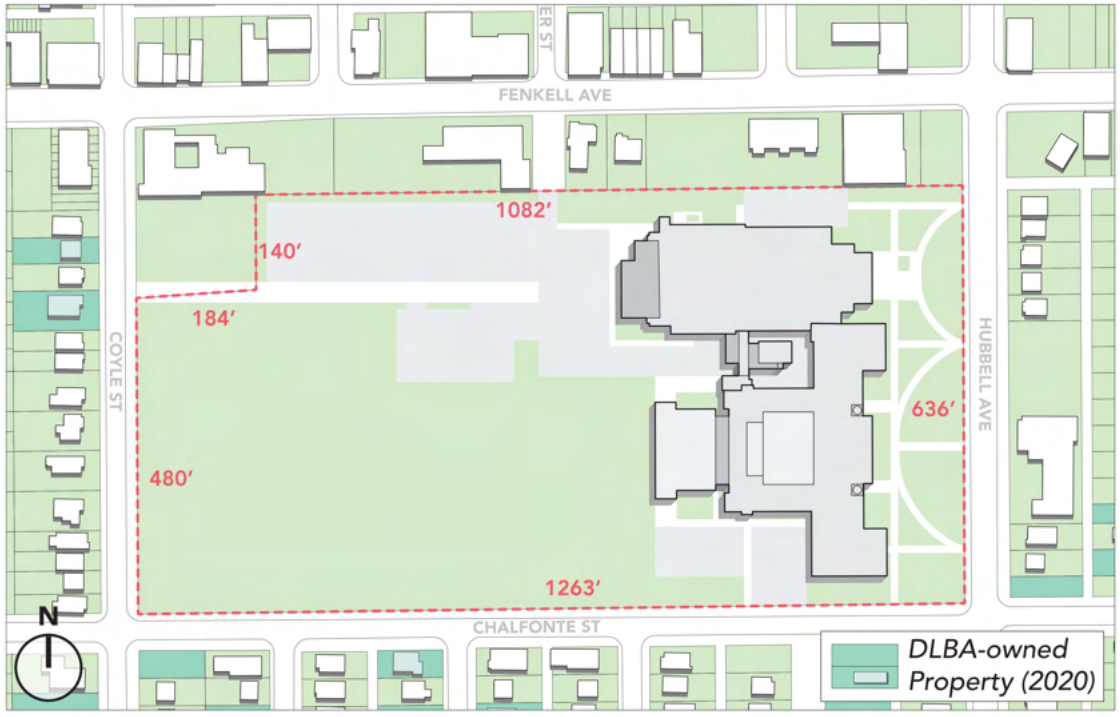
2.5%

Senior Population Growth
Moderate projected growth within 1mi radius (2019-2024)

1 Cooley

Address: 15055 Hubbell
District: 1
SNF Area: n/a
Owner: DPSCD
Gross Floor Area: 302,500 sf
Site Area: 18.12 ac
Floors: 3
Plan Type: Irregular
School Type: High School
Year Built: 1928, 1930, 1931, 1971
Zoning: R1
Base Rehab Cost (est): $3.6M
Total Rehab Cost (est): $50.2M





Building Overview

Sprawling high school complex, including 3-story 1928-31 building and 2-story 1971 addition.

Original unit has T-shaped configuration, with large common areas forming the central axis, and classrooms on the northeast and southeast wings.

Historically significant original unit features ornate Mediterranean-style flourishes, including golden brickwork, green and blue tile inlays, and elaborate terra cotta embellishments.

Grand 100x100' auditorium with 50' ceilings. Heavily damaged by fire.

Large 40x60' library with 30' ceilings and detailed woodwork.

Athletics wing features full-size gym with suspended running track above. Below gym is a 100' pool. All spaces connected to large locker rooms.

Original building has localized water damage in western classrooms. Main east wing largely intact.

1971 addition is nondescript steel structure with EIFS cladding. Scrapped and vandalized, but appears structurally sound.

1971 addition includes large cafeteria with kitchen and auto shop with 16' high bay, garage doors, and ventilation.

1971 addition's interiors are CMU and drywall on metal stud; spaces should be easily reconfigured.

Neighborhood Overview

Located in Hubbell-Lyndon Neighborhood, near Belmont and Bethune Communities.

Site is just south of Fenkell Ave, a major east-west corridor. There is some commercial activity along this stretch, though high vacancy.

Located approximately 3/4-mile north of Grand River, another major commercial corridor.

Residential neighborhoods to south have moderate vacancy rates, while neighborhoods to the north and west appear intact and stable.

Adams-Butzel Rec Center located just over 1 mile to east.

DMC Sinai Grace Hospital located just over 1 mile to north.

No neighborhood parks within a half mile of the school. The large school grounds are the primary open green space in this neighborhood.

Development Overview

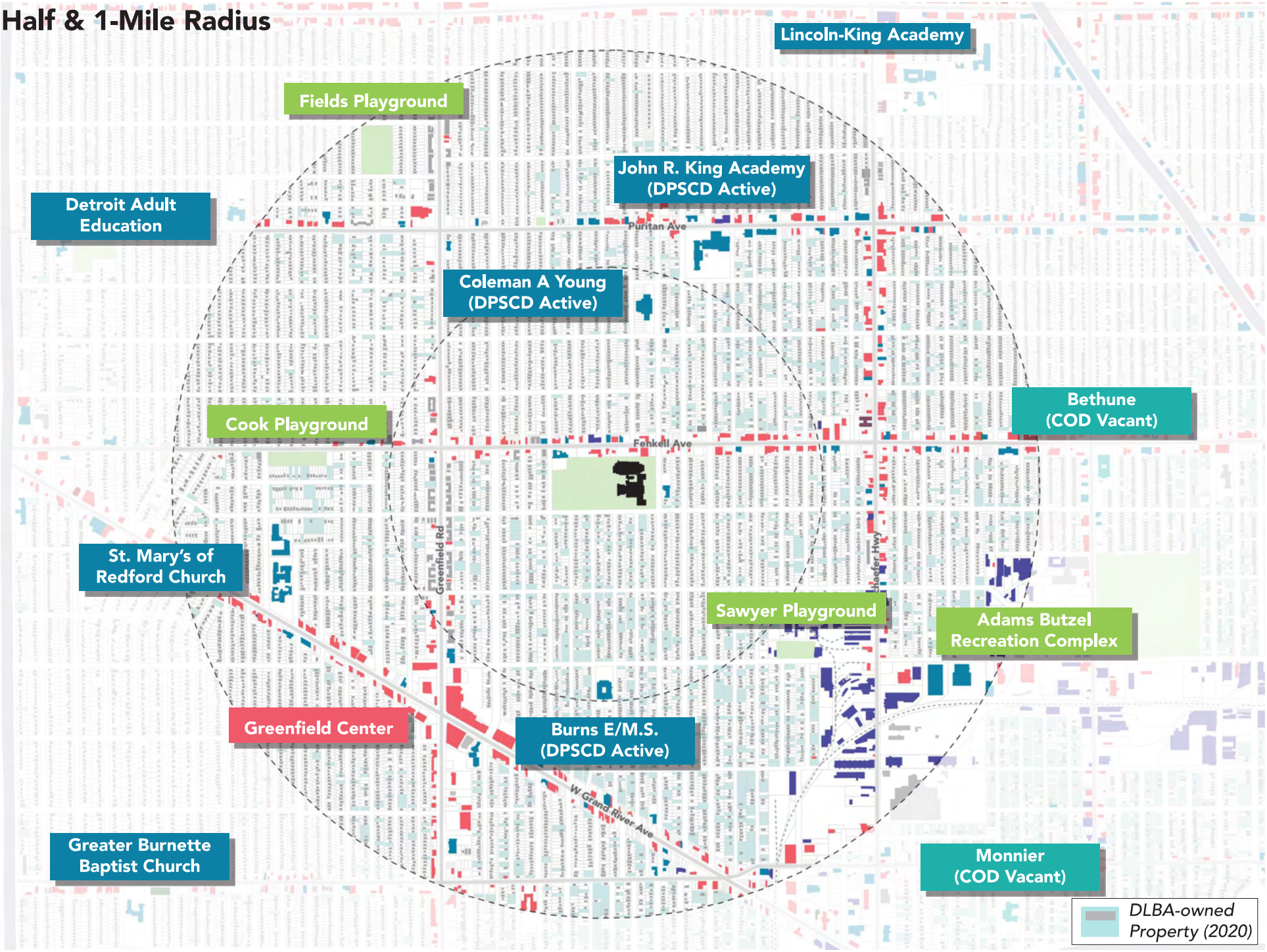
Opportunities:
- High-profile school building, considered an architectural gem
- Widespread community and alumni interest in seeing building rehabbed

Challenges
- Very high rehab cost due to large size.
- Heavy fire damage to centrally-located auditorium.

Real Estate Market summary:
(1-mi radius, compared against 63 City/ DPSCD-owned vacant schools)
- Multifamily: Below Average
- Retail: Average
- Office: Below Average
- Industrial: Average

Market-based Use Recommendations
- Best market for multifamily residential, due to lower than average vacancy rate and moderate rental rates.
- Retail market has high vacancy rate.

Half & 1-Mile Radius



By the Numbers

n/a

Walkscore
Not available

0.26 mi

Transit Access
10-15 minute walk to
DDOT Connect Ten or Key Route

1.26 mi

Freeway Access
10-15 minute drive
to nearest freeway ramp

0.41 mi

Park Access
5-10 walk to park
(1+ acre)

1.26 mi

Nearest Recreation Center
More than 15 minute walk to
nearest city rec center

0.67 mi

Library Access
10-15 minute walk to nearest
public library

21 %

Vacant/DLBA Property
Moderate rate of vacancy
within 0.25 mile radius (2020)

215

Building Alteration Permits
High rate of construction activity
within 1mi radius (2016-2018)

1.7 %

Senior Population Growth
Low projected growth
within 1mi radius (2019-2024)

East (main) elevation of the original school building, highlighting distinctive towers and ornate terra cotta details.

Ground-level arched window detail featuring terra cotta embellishments

Decorative tile and terra cotta elements on the southeast corner of the original school building.

The large 1971 addition viewed from the 3rd floor of the original building. The new addition is functional, but does not attempt to match the style or grandeur of the original building in any way.

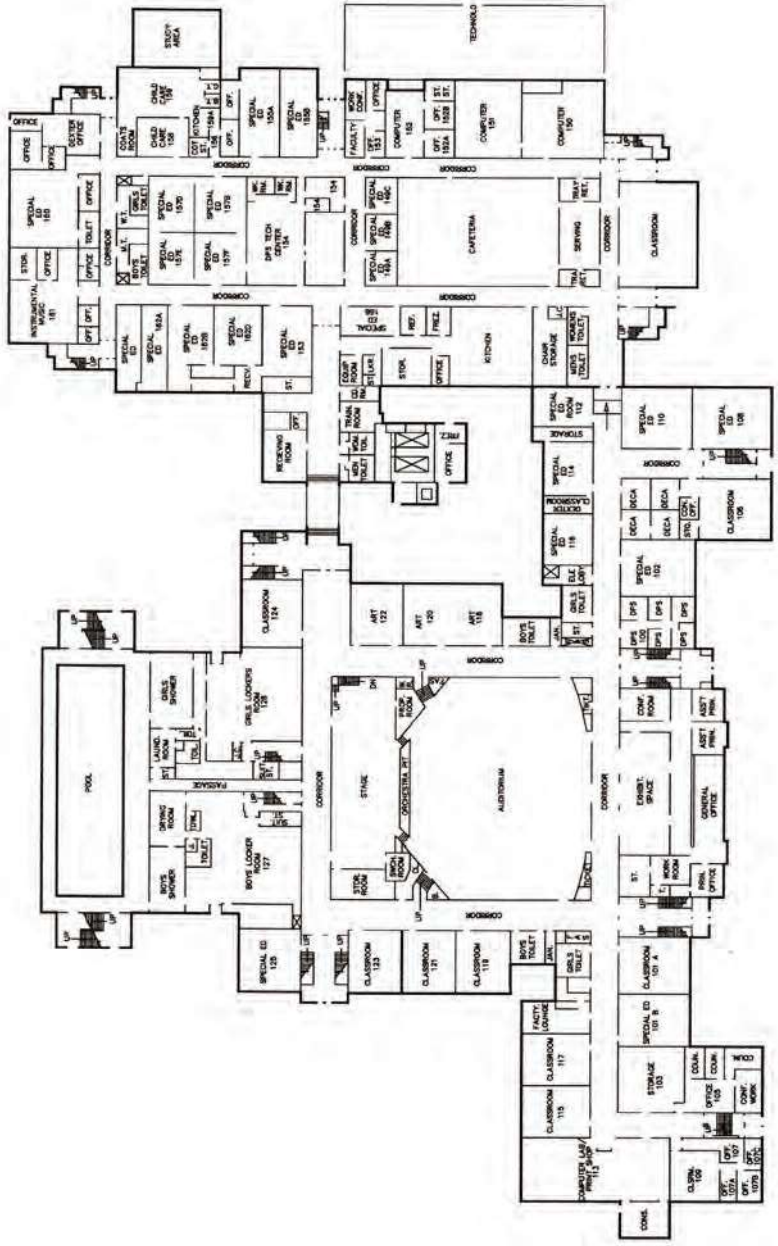
A typical classroom in the original unit, with plaster and wood finishes in relatively good condition. Metal replacement windows have been scrapped.

The large gymnasium viewed from the elevated running track.

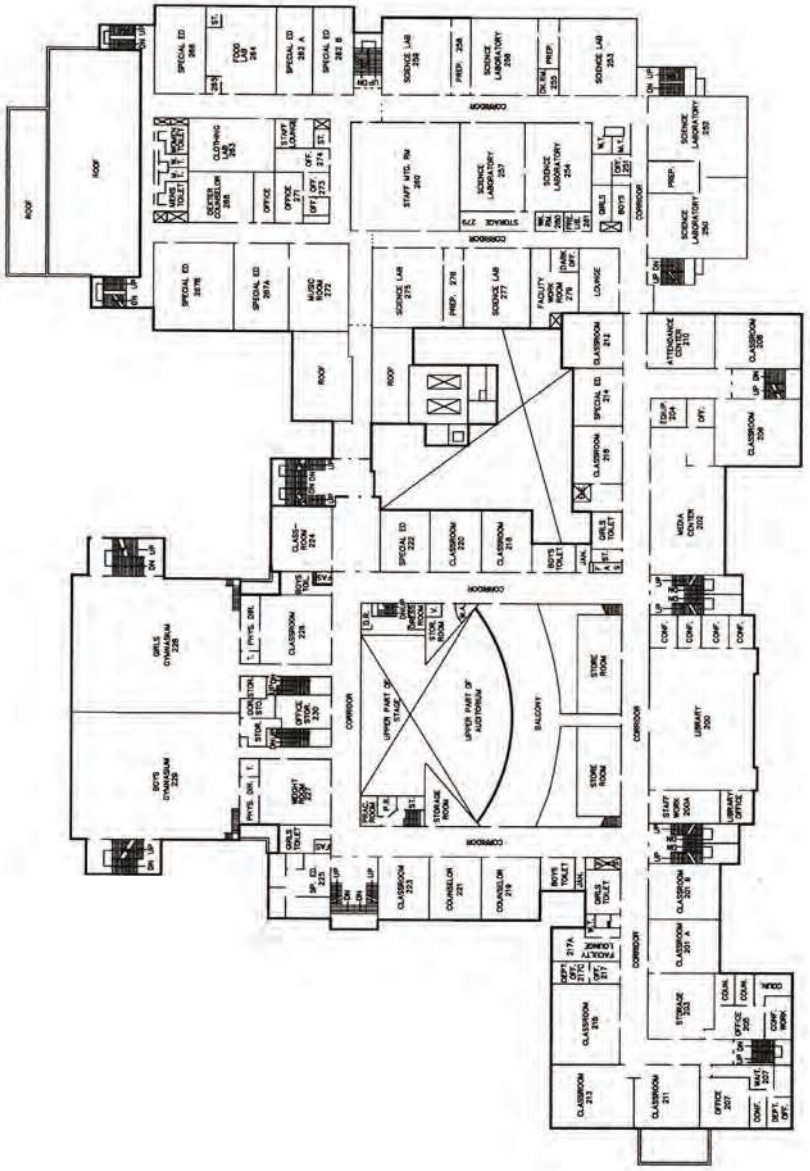
The central auditorium is extraordinarily grand, and supposedly modeled on Downtown Detroit's historic Fox Theater. The space was badly damaged by fire in 2017, causing harm to the seats, ornate plaster work, and leading to collapse of steel elements in the stage tower.

The large library features tall arched windows, ornate woodwork, small study rooms, and an unusual wood pulpit-like balcony accessed via a small spiral staircase.

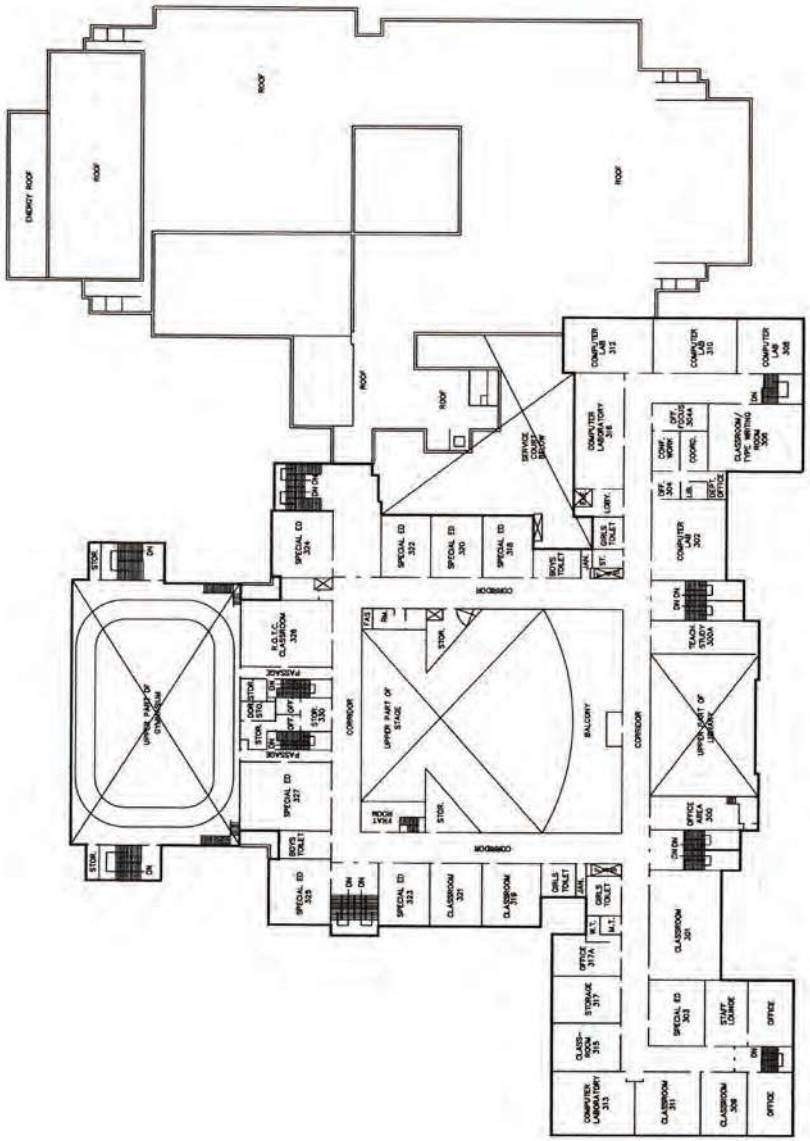
1st Floor



2nd Floor

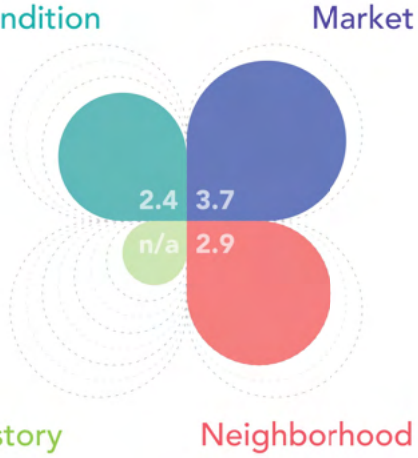


3rd Floor


ROOF
ENERGY ROOF
ROOF
ROOF
ROOF
SERVICE COURT BELOW
COMPUTER LABORATORY 316
COMPUTER 315
COMPUTER 315
COMPUTER LAB 308
OFF. FOOD 304
CLASSROOM/ TYPE WRITING ROOM 306
CONF. OFFICE
COMPUTER LAB 302
TEACH. STUDY ROOM 300
SPECIAL ED 324
SPECIAL ED 322
SPECIAL ED 320
SPECIAL ED 318
BOYS TOILET
GIRLS TOILET
R.O.T.C. CLASSROOM 326
UPPER PART OF GYMNASIUM
UPPER PART OF STAGE
BALCONY
CORRIDOR
OFFICE 304A
SPECIAL ED 327
SPECIAL ED 325
SPECIAL ED 323
CLASSROOM 321
CLASSROOM 319
OFFICE 317A
STORAGE 317
CLASS-ROOM 315
COMPUTER LABORATORY 313
CLASSROOM 311
CLASSROOM 309
SPECIAL ED 303
STAFF LOUNGE
OFFICE
CLASSROOM 301

1 Larned

Address: 23700 Clarita
District: 1
SNF Area: Northwest/Grand River
Owner: DPSCD
Gross Floor Area: 22,400 sf
Site Area: 1.85 ac
Floors: 1
Plan Type: T
School Type: Elementary
Year Built: 1953
Zoning: R1
Base Rehab Cost (est): $1.2M
Total Rehab Cost (est): $7.4M



Building Overview

Small 1-story Y-plan with one main double-loaded classroom corridor.

International-style architecture with continuous glass bands across the length of the facade. Windows primarily glass block over narrow steel frame operable lites. Frames mostly intact, but glass block is damaged and many original glass panes replaced with plexiglas.

Concrete post and beam structure with concrete roof deck and CMU infill walls.

Simple classroom finishes with painted CMU walls, wood or carpeted floors, acoustic tile ceilings, and wood built-in cabinets. Corridors are glazed block and CMU walls with metal lockers intact. Storefront windows at interior doors allow natural light into main corridor. Most glass is broken.

Radiators and plumbing scrapped; large holes have been opened in restroom walls and near drain areas in main hallway.

40x60' gym/cafeteria with glazed block walls and glass block clerestory. Wood floor in good condition. Attached kitchen and serving window, and folding tables in the walls. Gym and kitchen have dedicated exterior doors.

Auditorium has brick walls, modern wood paneling at stage and windows, and vaulted ceiling. Windows have sliding wood blackout panels. Wood seats intact. Water damage and bowed floors at stage.

Kindergarten has own wing with two conjoined classrooms with toilets and storage between. Main room has full-width windows on north and south walls.

Neighborhood Overview

Located in Seven Mile-Rouge neighborhood.

Surrounding residential neighborhood comprised of mostly small, 1-story detached homes.

Unusual site only has one street frontage at the main facade of school. School yard to the north is actually a separate City-owned park (Markulis Playground) that has no street access except a small driveway to the side of the school. School and park are bounded by residential backyards to east and west, the backs of commercial buildings to the north, and the school to the south. Because the school yard is not visible from any streets, it feels secluded and isolated.

North end of parcel is located behind businesses on 7 Mile Rd, including a small shopping center with an African market. There is currently no vehicle or pedestrian access from 7 Mile.

The 7 Mile/Telegraph area features many small apartment buildings and businesses, including two large strip malls, a full-service supermarket, and several smaller commercial buildings. Also nearby is the prominent Greater Grace Temple church.

Located 2 blocks west of closed Rogell Golf Course site.

Development Overview

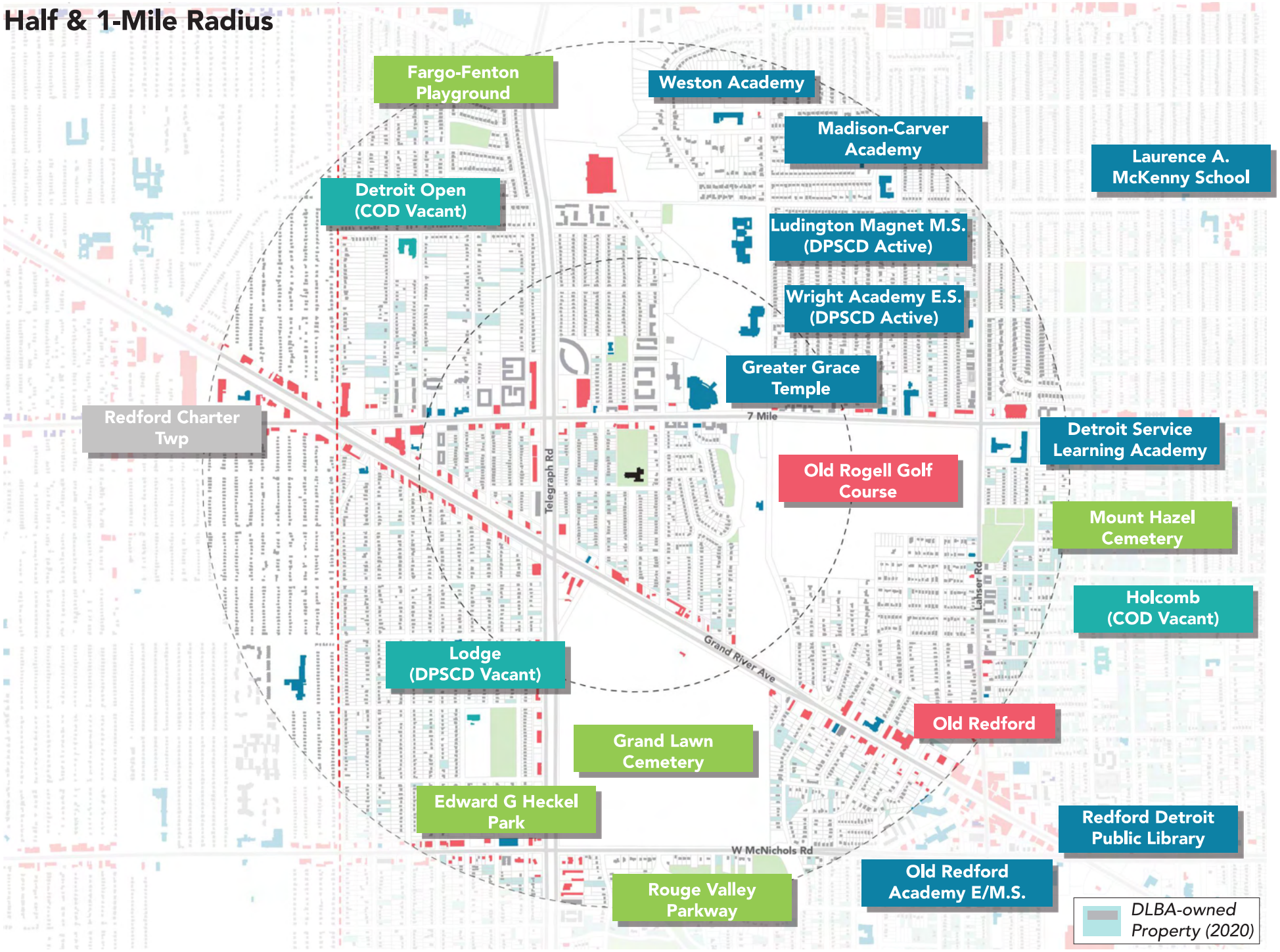
Opportunities:
- Building in excellent condition
- Adjacent to large City park; opportunity to combine parcels.
- Strong real estate market
- Located near multiple active commercial corridors.

Challenges
- Site itself is hidden within residential neighborhood.

Real Estate Market summary:
(1-mi radius, compared against 63 City/ DPSCD-owned vacant schools)
- Multifamily: Above average
- Retail: Average
- Office: Average
- Industrial: Below average

Market-based Use Recommendations
- Best market for senior housing; market currently has one senior apartment with very low vacancy and high rent. High projected senior population growth.

Half & 1-Mile Radius



By the Numbers

55/100

Walkscore
Somewhat walkable

0.11 mi

Transit Access
Less than 5 minute walk to
DDOT Connect Ten or Key Route

2.77 mi

Freeway Access
More than 10 minute drive
to nearest freeway ramp

0.0 mi

Park Access
Less than 5 minute walk to park
(1+ acre)

1.39 mi

Nearest Recreation Center
More than 15 minute walk to
nearest city rec center

1.53 mi

Library Access
More than 15 minute walk to
nearest public library

15%

Vacant/DLBA Property
Low rate of vacancy
within 0.25 mile radius (2020)

179

Building Alteration Permits
Moderate rate of construction activity
within 1mi radius (2016-2018)

3.1%

Senior Population Growth
High projected growth
within 1mi radius (2019-2024)

Main south elevation showing covered entrance at right, and classroom wing to left. Entrance area has been clearboarded to prevent trespassing, but designed to be an open canopy.

North elevation viewed from gymnasium roof. Original window scheme is clearly visible here. Windows are mostly intact and in repairable condition, though some glass panes have been replaced by plexiglass.

Gym exterior viewed from the northwest. Glass block clerestory has been boarded over but is intact. Some masonry distress is visible at the lefthand corner, likely due to water infiltration from roofing membrane deterioration around perimeter of gym.

The combination gym/cafeteria is in mostly good condition, though water infiltration and distress is noted at the ends of the roof beams and ceiling perimeter, where roof membrane has deteriorated. The kitchen and serving window are visible to the right.

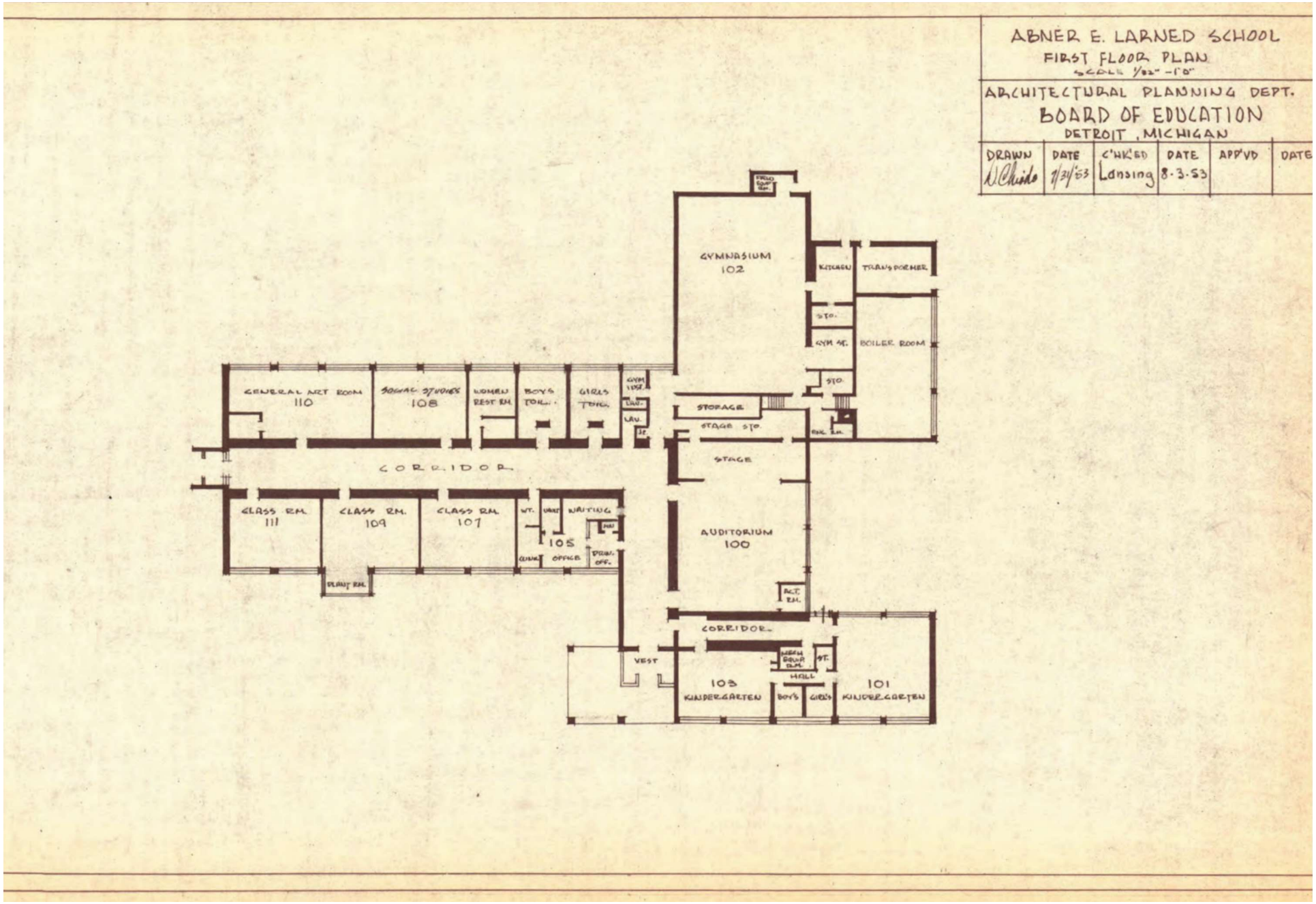
Classrooms feature large windows with glass block bands over steel frame operable lites. Most of the windows are in repairable condition.

A typical classroom features simple painted CMU walls, acoustic tile ceilings, simple wood cabinetry, and vinyl tile floors. Windows adjacent to doorways admit natural light into the main corridors.

The small auditorium has a unique wood panel finish, including sliding blackout panels at the windows. There is water damage to the stage area, but the space is otherwise in good condition.

Main classroom hallway, showing simple glazed block and painted CMU finishes. Some scrapping and vandalism has occurred, but otherwise finishes and structure are in good condition.

1st Floor


ABNER E. LARNED SCHOOL
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 1/32"-1'0"
ARCHITECTURAL PLANNING DEPT.
BOARD OF EDUCATION
DETROIT, MICHIGAN
DRAWN
DATE
C'HK'ED
DATE
APP'VD
DATE
GYMNASIUM 102
KITCHEN
TRANSFORMER
STO.
GYM M.
BOILER ROOM
STO.
GENERAL ART ROOM 110
SOCIAL STUDIES 108
WOMEN REST RM.
BOYS TOIL.
GIRLS TOIL.
GYM LOCK.
LAU.
STORAGE
STAGE STO.
STAGE
CORRIDOR
CLASS RM. 111
CLASS RM. 109
CLASS RM. 107
WT.
WAITING
105
CLERK
OFFICE
DRIN. FT.
PLANT RM.
AUDITORIUM 100
ACT. RM.
CORRIDOR
VEST
HALL
ST.
103 KINDERGARTEN
BOY'S
GIRL'S
101 KINDERGARTEN