



MIDWEST TIREMAN

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CITY OF DETROIT

SERVING THE MIDWEST-TIREMAN TRIANGLE - MAKING CONNECTIONS WITH NEW OPPORTUNITIES

MARCH 2024

WHAT MAKES A FRAMEWORK?

A Framework is a planning process that helps the City:

- IMAGINE** what a healthy and beautiful neighborhood needs;
- DISCUSS** what matters to residents and community members;
- PLAN** how to make future improvements; and
- PRIORITIZE** what should be done with available resources.



In order for a Framework to be successful, it must be built upon meaningful engagement with the community. It should:

- LISTEN AND RESPOND** to resident and community needs;
- BUILD ON THE INVESTMENTS** and efforts that are already happening in the neighborhood;
- CREATE A SHARED VISION** for the future that unites residents, businesses, developers, and City government; and
- ACT AS A TOOL** for residents and community groups to advocate for the changes they want to see.



With these standards in mind, the planning team used the following principles to guide this process:

- BUILD UPON WHAT'S ALREADY THERE**, by starting with—and seeking ways to strengthen—existing community investments;
- SYNTHESIZE STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK**, by creatively transforming feedback into the building blocks of the plan;
- BE RESOURCEFUL**, by looking for opportunities and solutions that address more than one issue or need;
- BE STRATEGIC**, by developing an innovative, longer-term vision that can be started with practical, implementable projects to make an immediate impact.



NEIGHBORHOOD FRAMEWORK COMPLETED!



A scenic view down Oregon Street in Midwest-Tireman. Credit: Andrew Wald.

The Midwest-Tireman Neighborhood Framework—a report that will guide the City's investments in Midwest-Tireman over the next several years—is now available online!

Over the course of a year-long planning and engagement process led by the City of Detroit Planning and Development Department (PDD), Midwest-Tireman residents have shared their insights, feedback, and ideas about the past, present, and future of the neighborhood. Now, they will be able to access the outcome of their collaboration with the City—the Midwest-Tireman Neighborhood Framework—on the City of Detroit's website.

The Midwest-Tireman Neighborhood Framework represents a broad, community-driven vision for the future of the neighborhood. It was developed by a team of urban planners, designers, and analysts at Interboro Partners, the Detroit Collaborative Design Center (DCDC), Rossetti, Spalding DeDecker, and BJH Advisors, in partnership with PDD and residents. The Framework is a document that makes action-oriented recommendations about how the City can support, strengthen, and revitalize the neighborhood in the short-, medium-, and long-term. It also acts as a tangible resource that community organizations, institutions, and individuals can use to pursue grants and other funding opportunities to further their goals.

The recommendations in the Framework were formed through a process that matched community needs and priorities with opportunities that were identified through professional urban analysis. First, residents shared their input during a series of engagement events, which included open house-style meetings, collaborative mapping and roleplaying activities, and open-ended discussions. Then, the planning team conducted additional research to identify actionable strategies and next steps that would work towards addressing the needs and priorities shared by residents.

With each recommendation, the planning team sought to accomplish more than one goal, and also to consider immediate- and short-term actions that could kickstart a longer process of neighborhood revitalization. To accomplish this, the Framework organizes recommendations into "Hubs," where multiple community assets and opportunities overlap.

For example, one of the neighborhood Hubs—identified as The Resiliency Hub—is centered around Equity Alliance, a local anchor organization focused on neighborhood economic growth and resiliency. During the engagement process, many of the aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners in the community expressed the need for the City to offer more information and guidance about the requirements for running a business, as well as help getting started. Equity Alliance has already been convening meetings between business owners to share information, but they have

expressed the need for additional support. In response, the Framework recommends that the City should work with Equity Alliance to formalize these sessions as "Office Hours," and should commit to having City representatives attend each meeting and share information.

Another example is The Food and Drink Hub, centered around the former site of the Ruthruff Elementary School. Midwest-Tireman residents have unanimously expressed the need for more food options in the neighborhood. Through additional analysis, the planning team confirmed that not only does Midwest-Tireman fall in a food access gap—where the nearest grocery stores are over five miles away—but also that the Ruthruff site is at the perfect location for a regional food retailer, with its adjacency to I-96 and Livernois. As a result, the Framework recommends that the Ruthruff site should be marketed to a regional food retailer.

In addition to the Hubs, the Framework includes recommendations about Community Corridors and Safe Streets, which focus on mobility and street improvements, as well as Gateways, which focus on improving the entry points into the neighborhood. Each recommendation can be found in greater detail in the final report, along with information on how the City might start to move them forward.

The City of Detroit and the rest of the Framework planning team would like to thank the residents, community members, and collaborators who made this Framework possible.

Priorities of Midwest-Tireman, as Described by Community Members

"Make this neighborhood a place that I am PROUD to call HOME."

Throughout the Framework process, the planning team used a broad range of engagement methods and activities to capture as many perspectives as possible. Through podcast sessions, focus groups, collaborative mapping, roleplaying exercises, open houses, and resource expos, the team sought to learn from residents how the Framework could best support their vision for the future, while also using the planning process to share useful information and resources in the short term.

Discussions and activities focused on five planning themes:

- Housing and Neighborhoods**
- Business and Retail**
- Parks and Open Space**
- Streets and Mobility**
- Industrial Development**

Here are some of the priorities that Midwest-Tireman residents shared about each:

- Housing and Neighborhoods:**
 - Connect current residents to existing resources!
 - Support home rehabs and new multifamily housing options!
 - Bring in more residents!

Business and Retail:

- Bring more food options to the neighborhood!
- Local businesses need support from the City, in the form of information, street improvements, and investment!

"Bring businesses HERE so that I do not always have to go to DEARBORN and other suburbs to shop."

Streets and Mobility:

- Streets need to be made safer, using traffic calming measures, improved crossings, and improved lighting!
- Connections should be made to the Joe Louis Greenway!

Parks and Open Space:

- Existing open spaces need more investment, more resources, and more amenities!
- Access to open spaces needs to be improved!

Industrial Development:

- The future of the Tireman-Epworth site is critical to the future of the neighborhood and must be carefully and intentionally planned!
- Industrial businesses need to keep their spaces clean!

"What's Going On?" in Midwest-Tireman

Great things are happening in Midwest-Tireman! Here are just a few of them.

A primary goal of the Framework is to build upon existing neighborhood assets and to strengthen the positive ongoing initiatives led by community members, organizations, institutions, and City agencies. Here are some of the exciting projects in the neighborhood that the Framework aims to celebrate.

The Blue Bird Inn Breaks Ground! For the past several years, the Detroit Sound Conservancy (DSC) has been working to protect, preserve, and rehabilitate the Blue Bird Inn, a historic jazz and blues venue located on Tireman Ave. According to Jonah Raduns-Silverstein, the director of DSC, the goal is to reopen the Blue Bird Inn as "a music venue, community gathering space, and cultural education center and archive." In October of 2023, a groundbreaking event and barbecue was held outside the venue to celebrate the start of the next phase of the rehabilitation project. [1,2]

Class Act Detroit Moves into the House of Hip-Hop! Class Act Detroit, a non-profit organization, led by Rashard Dobbins, that focuses on empowering youth through music and arts education, has been working to upgrade its headquarters and



Residents stand in front of the Historic Blue Bird Inn during a community event. Credit: John Sivills.

expand its reach. Last year, the organization acquired and began renovating the former St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church—now rebranded as the House of Hip-Hop—with the help of Ikea volunteers. The House of Hip-Hop will function as a safe and educational space for youth, a music venue, a cafe, and a community kitchen. [3,4]

The Joe Louis Greenway Trailhead Opens! The Joe Louis Greenway is a 27.5-mile recreational trail that will connect pedestrians and cyclists to

parks and neighborhoods throughout the city. The Greenway intersects with the western border of Midwest-Tireman, and will play a significant role in bringing new economic growth and open space amenities to the neighborhood. In November 2023, the trailhead park, which marks an entry point to the Greenway off of Warren Ave, held a ribbon-cutting event and opened to the public. Additionally, the Greenway team will be opening an office in the headquarters of Equity Alliance, where future meetings on the ongoing project will be held. [5,6]

THE MIDWEST-TIREMAN STEERING COMMITTEE

PORTRAITS BY RASHEDUL H. DEEPON

The nine members of the committee are strong community leaders, advocates, and activists who have been working hard to bring about positive change in their neighborhood. From job training, to food access, to sustainability, to youth education, these residents are deeply aware of the needs of the neighborhood, and have been putting in the work to address those needs on a day to day basis. Here, we spotlight the members of the Steering Committee:

Carlton Ballard,
Equity Alliance



Carolyn Pruitt,
My Community SPEAKS



Deanna Stewart,
Equity Alliance



Ethelyn Carroll,
United Block Club Council



Jennifer Aparicio,
eXp Realty



Mimi Trent,
Central Detroit Christian (CDC)



Rashard Dobbins,
Class Act Detroit



Ru Shann Long,
Greenway Heritage Conservancy



Sheri Burton,
Midwest Civic Council of Block Clubs



THE FRAMEWORK PODCAST,
HOSTED BY RASHEDUL H. DEEPON



THE FRAMEWORK PODCAST

Want to learn more about the Steering Committee, or about the history and priorities of Midwest-Tireman? Follow the Framework Podcast, hosted by Rashedul H. Deepon, which can be found on the City of Detroit's website, or on The Framework Podcast YouTube channel.

Inside Spread:
Neighborhood Framework: Overview

Back Cover:
Framework Hub Spotlights

References:

- <https://detroitssound.org/give/bird/>
- <https://www.onedetroit.com/news/one-detroit-historic-detroit-jazz-club-the-blue-bird-inn-set-for-grand-reveal-by-detroit-sound-conservancy/>
- <https://www.classactdetroit.org/mission>
- <https://www.fox2detroit.com/news/vacant-detroit-church-being-converted-into-hip-hop-programming-facility>
- <https://detroitmi.gov/departments/general-services-department/joe-louis-greenway>
- <https://wdet.org/2023/11/02/joe-louis-greenway-gateway-park-opens-on-detroit-s-west-side/>



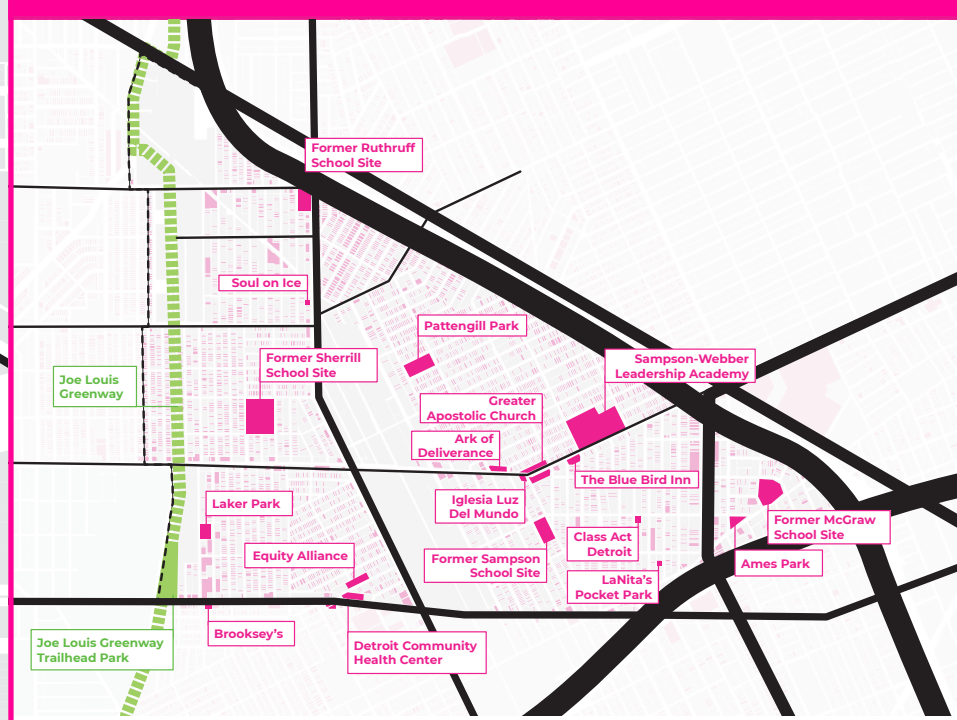
ABOUT THIS FRAMEWORK!

The Midwest-Tireman Framework builds upon neighborhood strengths and assets, looks for opportunities within neighborhood challenges, and consists of three primary elements: Hubs & Nodes, Community Corridors & Safe Streets, and Neighborhood Gateways.

The Framework recommends four major hubs, located throughout the neighborhood. The Resiliency Hub, centered around Equity Alliance, focuses on economic growth and resiliency. The Learning & Healing Hub, located around the Sampson-Webber Leadership Academy, focuses on building and strengthening neighborhood stability, as well as youth programming. The Food & Drink Hub is located at the former Ruthruff Elementary site and focuses on expanded food access in the neighborhood, and building a destination for eating and drinking. Finally, the Recreation & Restoration Hub is located at the former Sherrill Elementary site and focuses on expanding access to open space amenities.

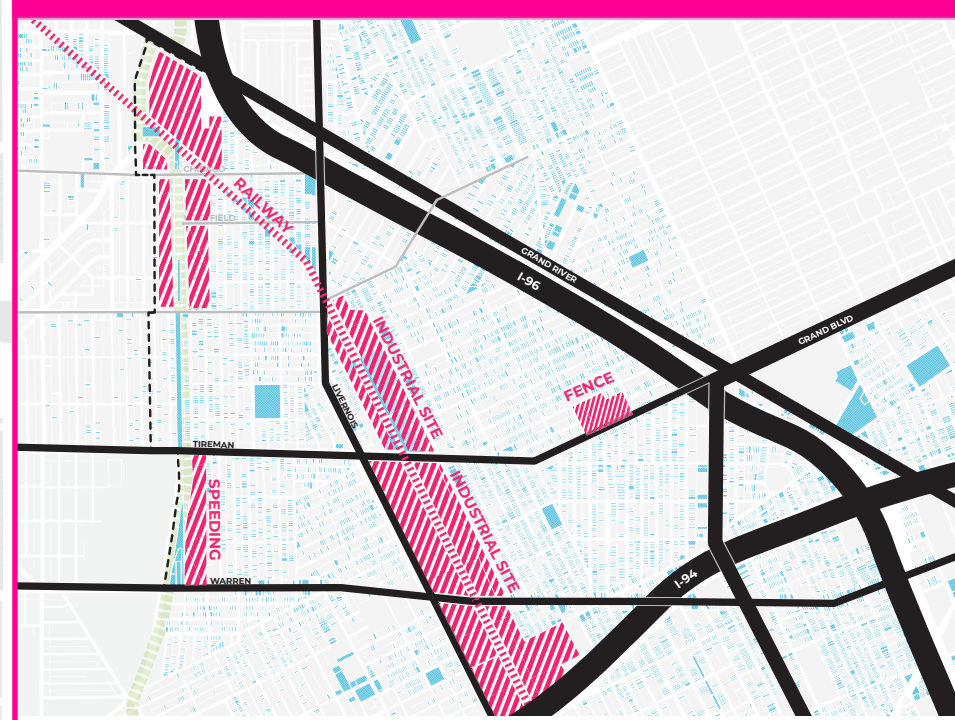
This spread gives an overview of a few of the major priority projects within the Framework. To learn more, access the full Framework report on the City of Detroit's website, at www.detroitmi.gov/midwest-tireman/framework/.

Neighborhood Strengths and Assets



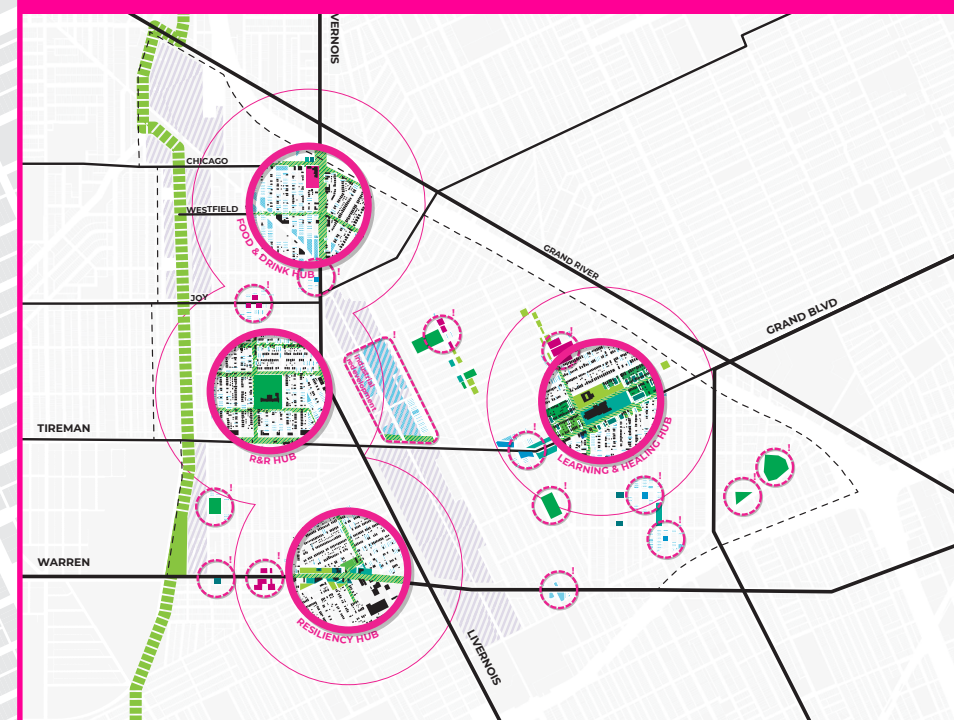
The Framework seeks to build upon the existing strengths and assets found in the neighborhood. Some of Midwest-Tireman's strengths include: community organizations and institutions, parks and open spaces, active businesses and churches, the major streets and highways, the Joe Louis Greenway, and—of course—the residents themselves.

Neighborhood Challenges and Opportunities



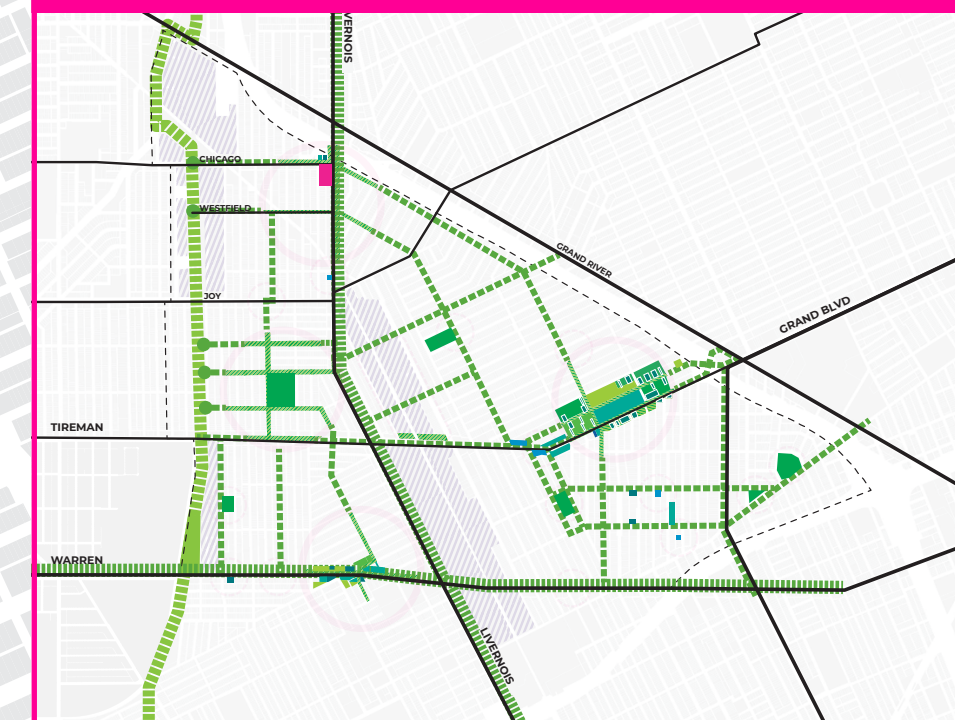
In addition to building upon neighborhood strengths, the Framework aims to reframe some of the challenges of the neighborhood as opportunities. For example, the large quantity of vacant land is a challenge on one hand, but also creates opportunities for new development, open space, and programming on the other hand.

Hubs and Nodes



The Hubs have been identified based on in-depth site analysis and continuous dialogue and conversation with community and City stakeholders. Each Hub builds upon existing investments made by the community and seeks to leverage, catalyze, and build upon these efforts. The Nodes are a mix of existing neighborhood assets that should be strengthened, as well as opportunity sites for future projects and developments.

Community Corridors and Safe Streets



The Community Corridors & Safe Streets are the key streets that have been identified in the neighborhood for improvements. Corridors represent major avenues in need of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure upgrades, while Safe Streets represent the smaller streets that would benefit from short- and long-term traffic calming, signage, and planting upgrades.

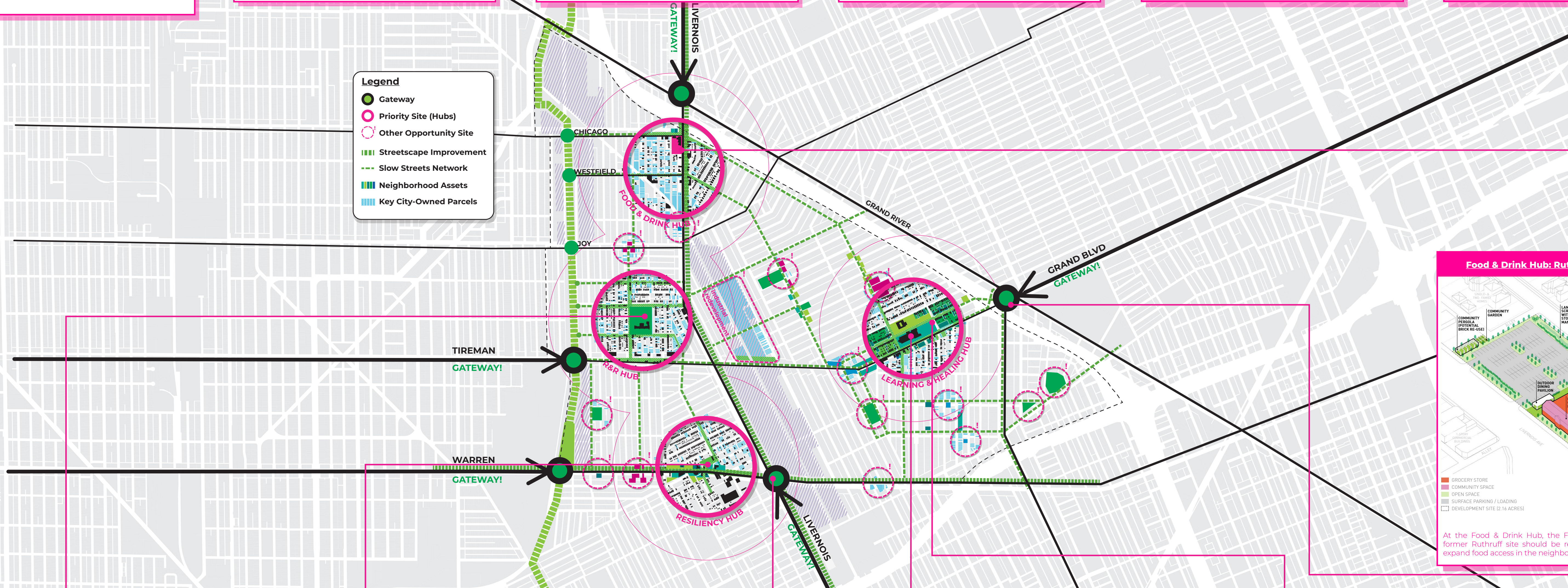
Gateways



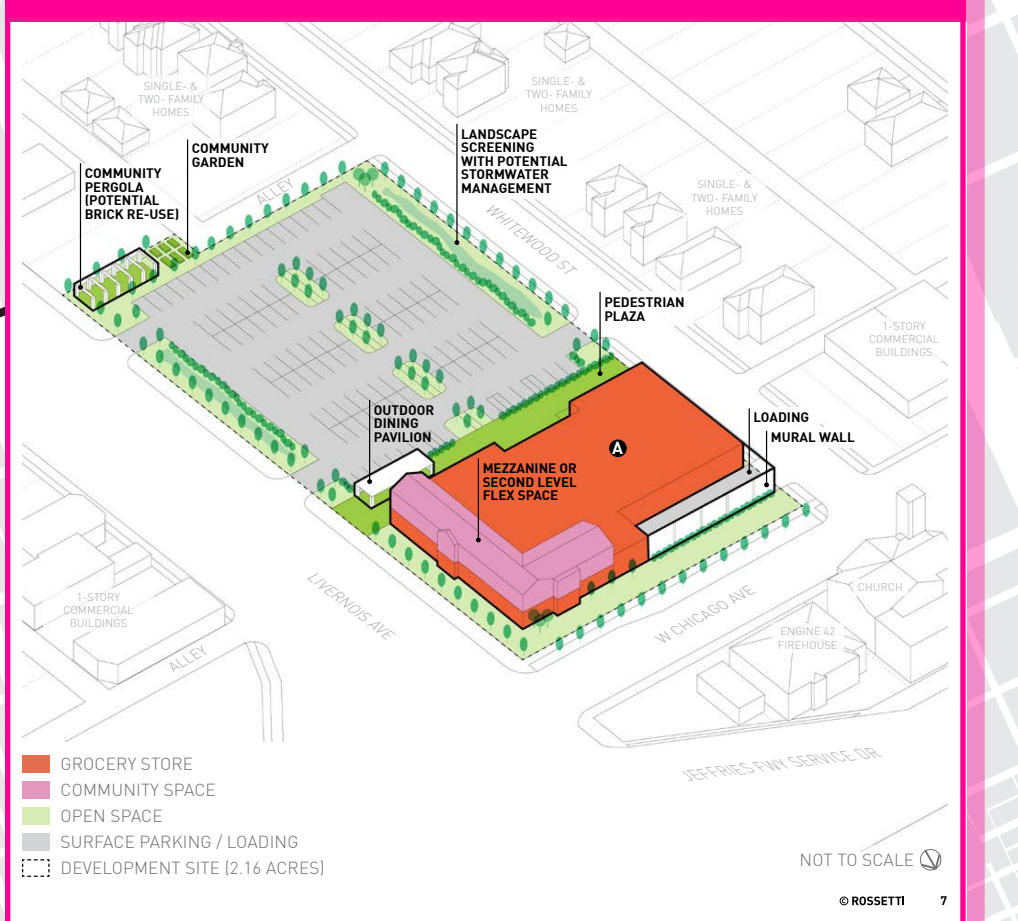
Finally, the Gateways represent the entry points into the neighborhood, which should be improved through signage, artwork, and other pedestrian safety features.

Legend

- Gateway
- Priority Site (Hubs)
- Other Opportunity Site
- ▬ Streetscape Improvement
- ▬ Slow Streets Network
- ▬ Neighborhood Assets
- ▬ Key City-Owned Parcels

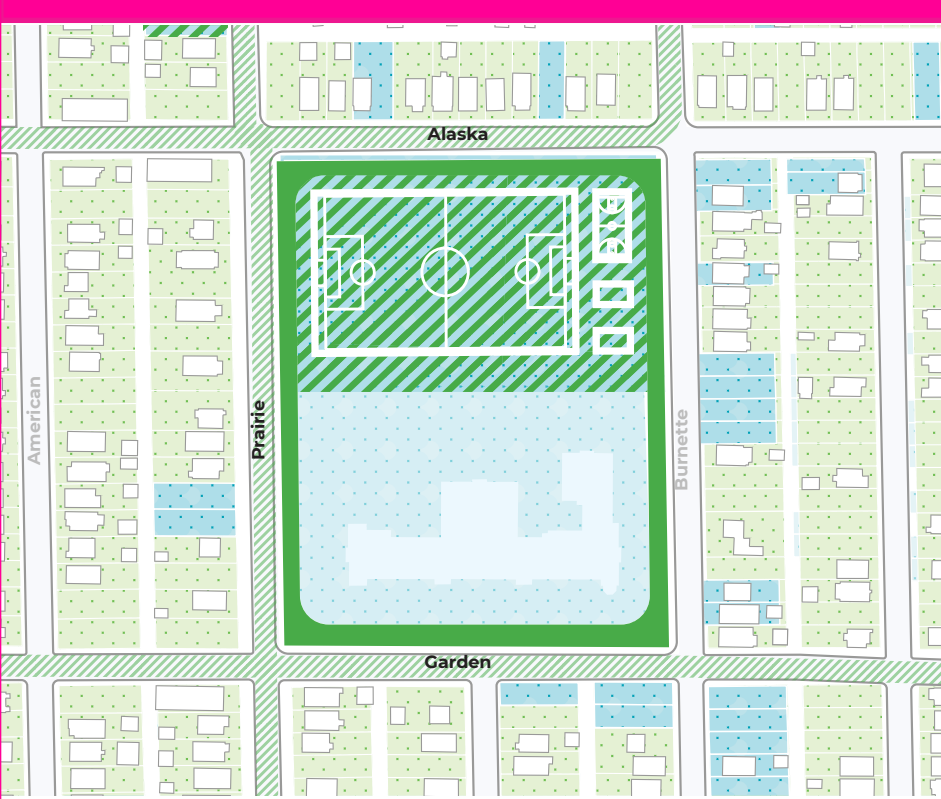


Food & Drink Hub: Ruthruff Redevelopment



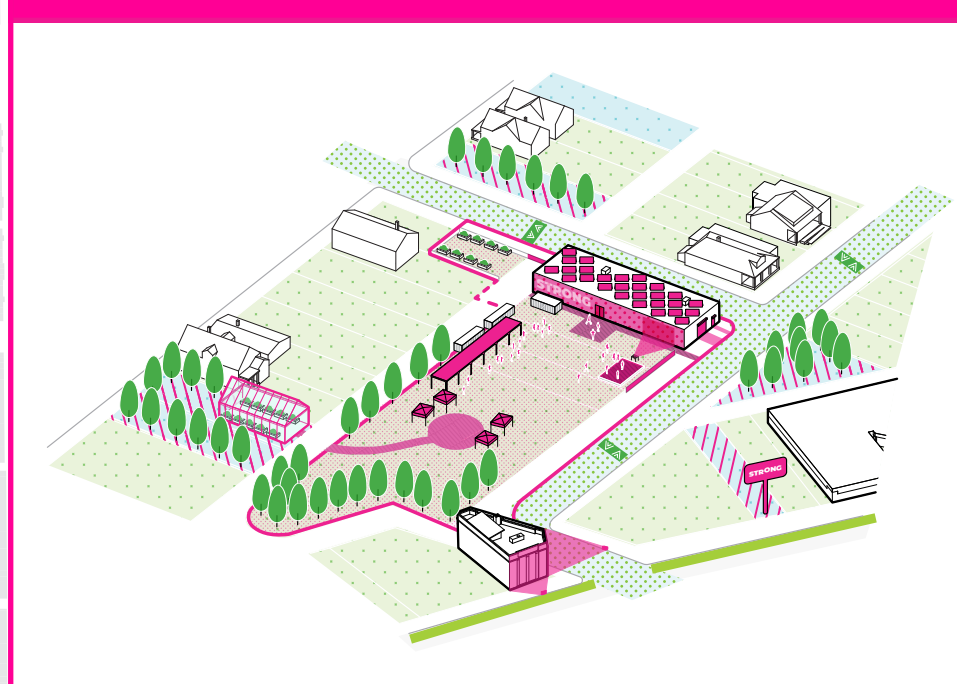
At the Food & Drink Hub, the Framework recommends that the former Ruthruff site should be redeveloped as a grocery store to expand food access in the neighborhood.

Recreation & Restoration Hub: Sherrill Site Park



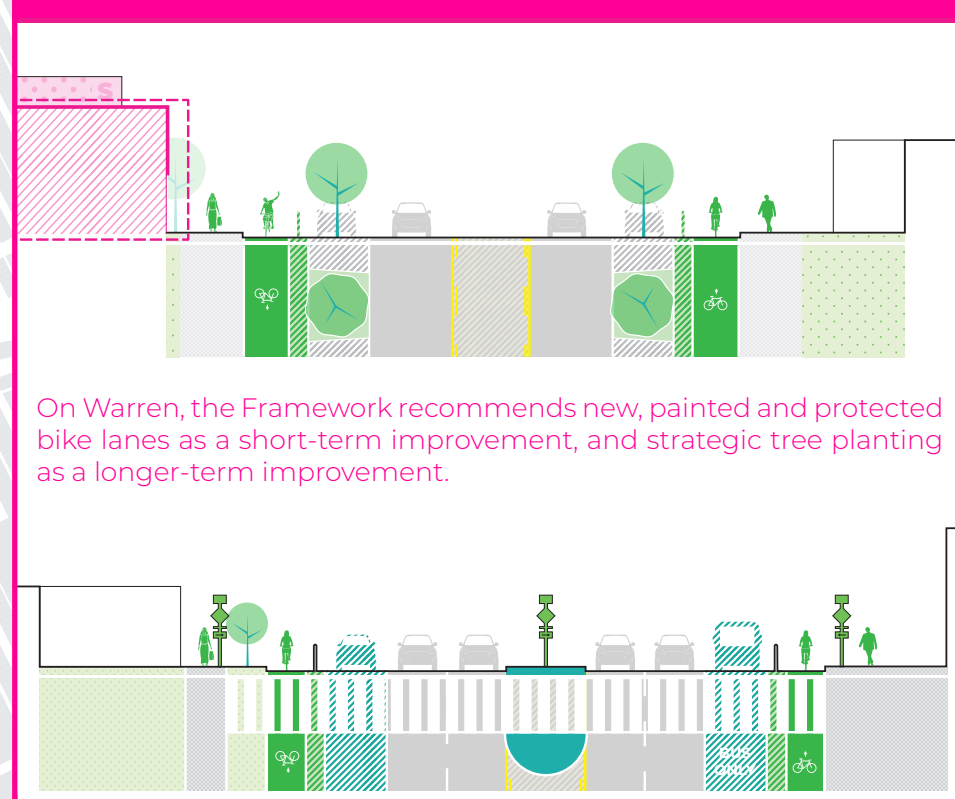
At the Recreation & Restoration Hub, the Framework makes recommendations for amenities that could be developed on the former Sherrill site.

The Resiliency Hub: Equity Alliance Yard



The Resiliency Hub recommends programming and physical space improvements at Equity Alliance, to support their efforts to build neighborhood resiliency and strengthen their headquarters as a community yard.

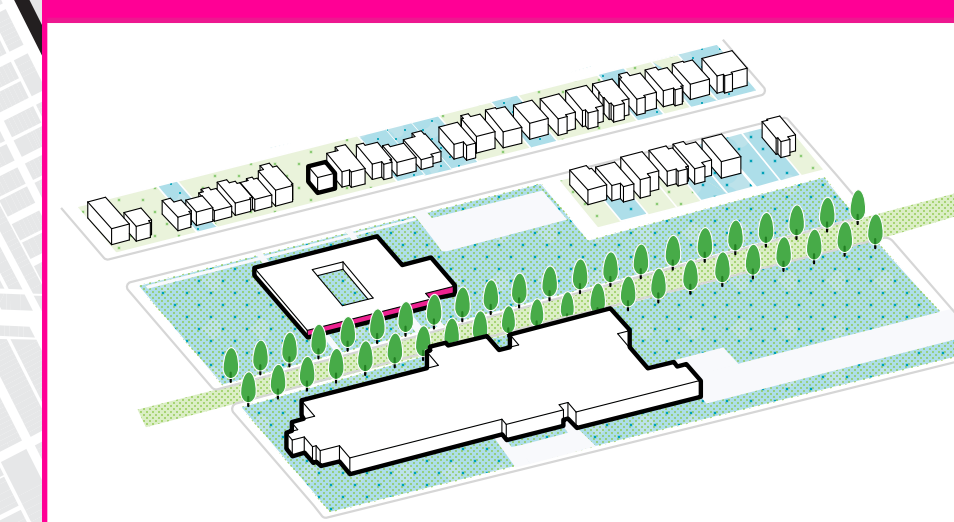
Warren & Livernois Streetscape Improvements



On Warren, the Framework recommends new, painted and protected bike lanes as a short-term improvement, and strategic tree planting as a longer-term improvement.

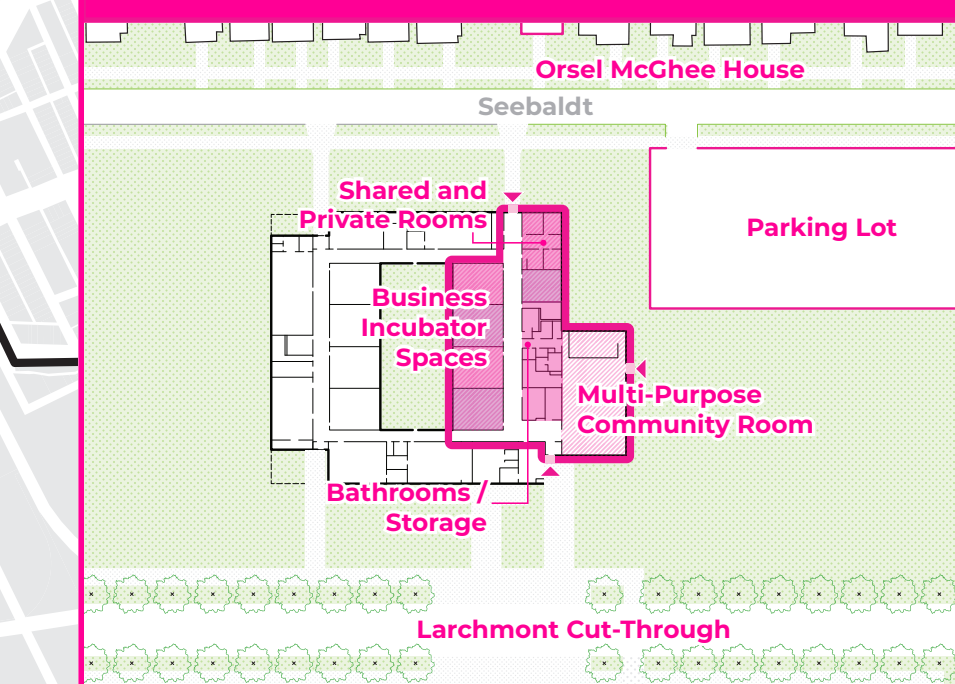
On Livernois, the Framework recommends safety improvements to bike lanes and pedestrian crossings, including high-visibility paint, pedestrian lights, and medians at strategic locations.

The Learning & Healing Hub: Larchmont Cut-Thru



At the Learning & Healing Hub, the Framework recommends a cut-through on Larchmont Street to stitch together two sides of the street and increase neighborhood stability.

The Learning & Healing Hub: Biddle Activation



Building on the Larchmont Cut-Through, the Framework also recommends the Biddle building for tactical activation as a neighborhood rec center, focused on youth programming.

Example Gateway Improvements



At the Gateways, the Framework recommends new lighting, signage, wayfinding, artwork, and pedestrian safety improvements. This sketch illustrates these concepts for the I-96 overpass at Grand River and Tireman.

FOUR HUBS TO BUILD ON

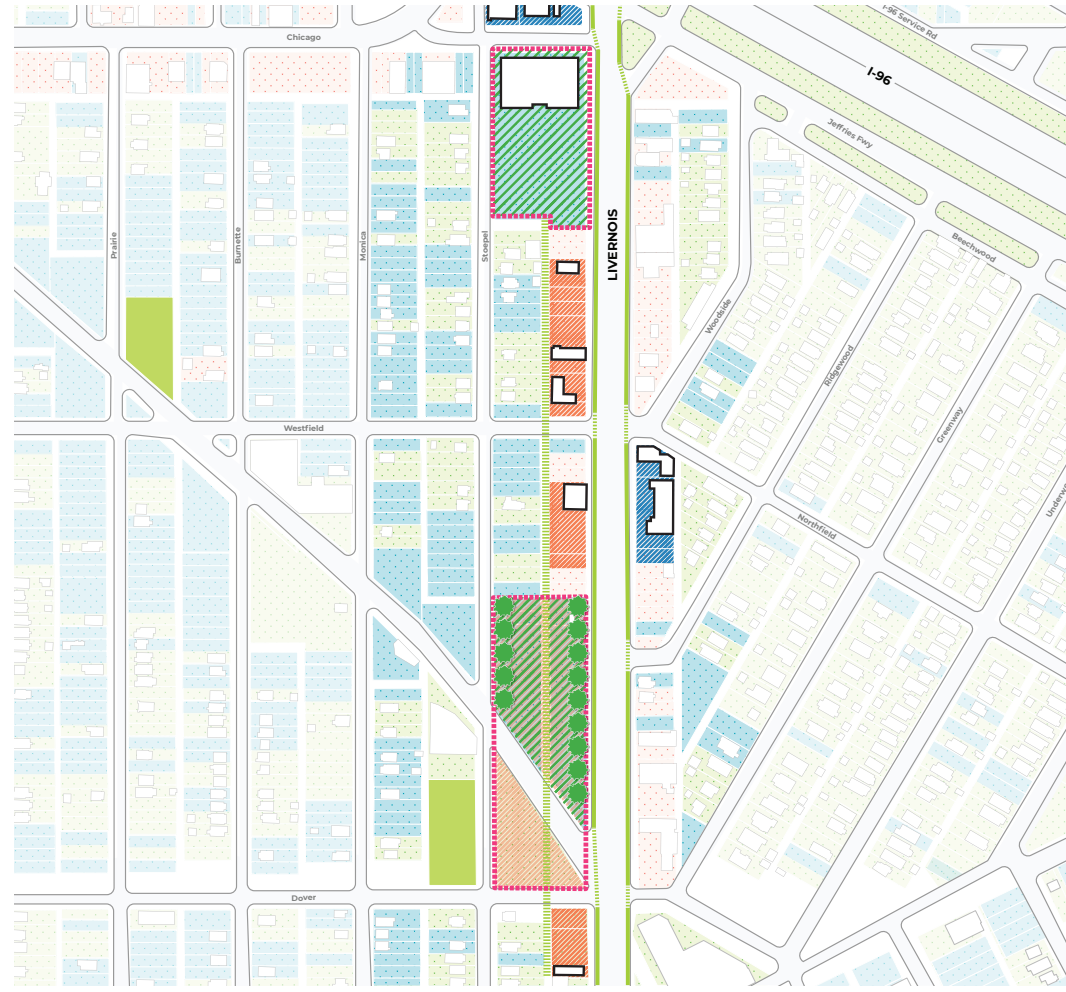
The four Hubs in this Framework represent areas in the neighborhood where strategic investments can kickstart a larger process of revitalization. Each Hub is centered around a different neighborhood asset.

The Food & Drink Hub and the Recreation & Restoration Hub both focus on large, vacant school sites that can be redeveloped to expand access to important amenities in the neighborhood.

The Learning & Healing Hub and the Resiliency Hub, on the other hand, both focus on active sites where anchors of the community—such as the Sampson-Webber Leadership Community and Equity Alliance, respectively—are located.

While each Hub focuses on a different theme, the recommendations overlap and support one another, with the goal of addressing multiple community priorities at once.

THE FOOD & DRINK HUB: REDEVELOPMENT AT RUTHRUFF

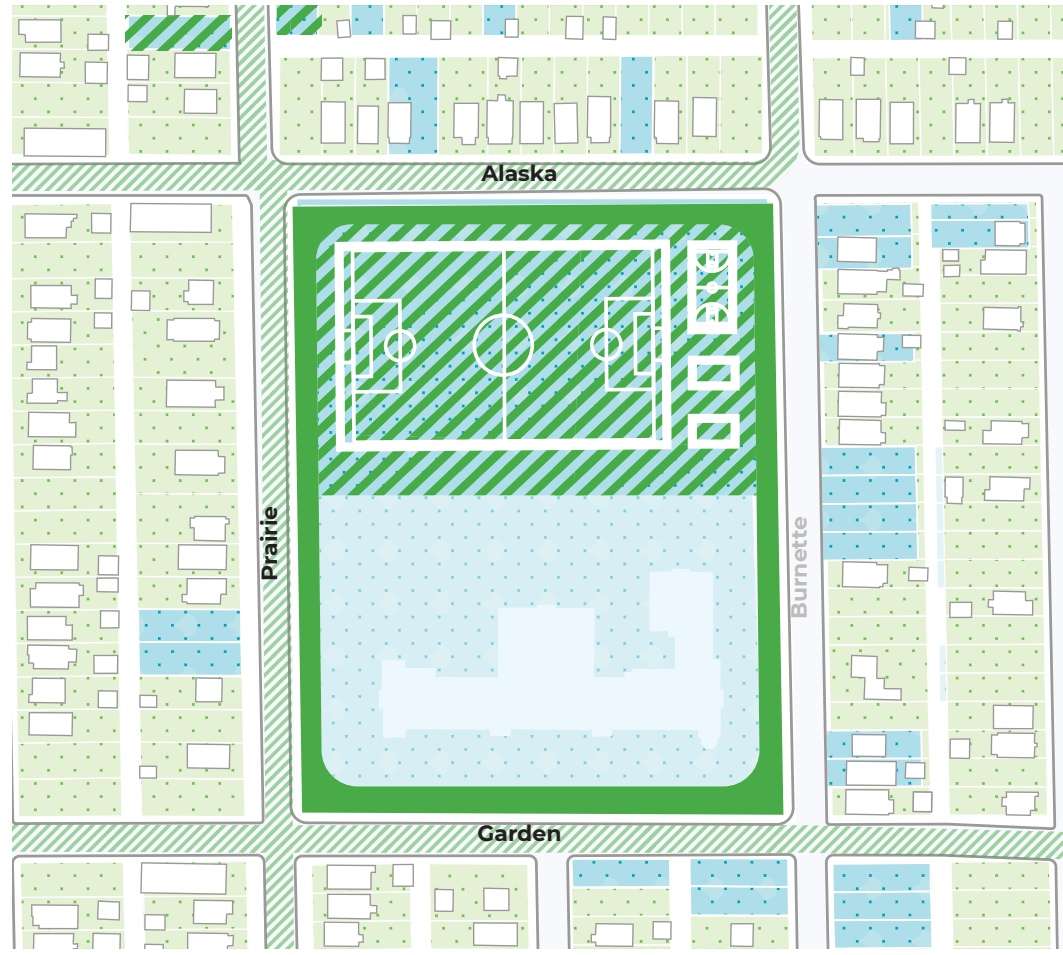


Building a New Eating and Drinking Destination

The Food and Drink Hub focuses on the former site of the Ruthruff Elementary School, located off of I-96 and Livernois. The site's location and highway access makes it a key candidate for a new regional grocery store or supermarket, which responds to the high demand for increased and improved food access in the neighborhood.

As the City lays the groundwork for this longer-term initiative, City-owned sites at this Hub should be used to host pop-up events, such as food truck festivals, farmer's markets, or mobile grocery stores. These events should heavily feature Midwest-Tireman businesses, such as Soul On Ice, Brooksey's, What Up Dough?, Delicious Dishes By Donna, and the many other amazing local businesses that the neighborhood has to offer. These steps can help to plant the seed for business owners to launch brick-and-mortar locations, and can help establish an eating and drinking destination on Livernois.

THE RESTORATION & RECREATION HUB: REIMAGINING THE SHERRILL SITE



Expanding Access to Open Space Amenities in Midwest-Tireman

The Recreation and Restoration Hub focuses on the former site of the Sherrill Elementary School. With the Sherrill school slated for demolition, the planning team conducted an analysis of neighborhood access to open space amenities, along with a test fit for amenities that would fit on the Sherrill site.

Based on this analysis, the team found the Sherrill site to be at a good location to expand access to playgrounds and other recreational amenities, such as a soccer field, basketball court, and a trail for walking, running, and cycling.

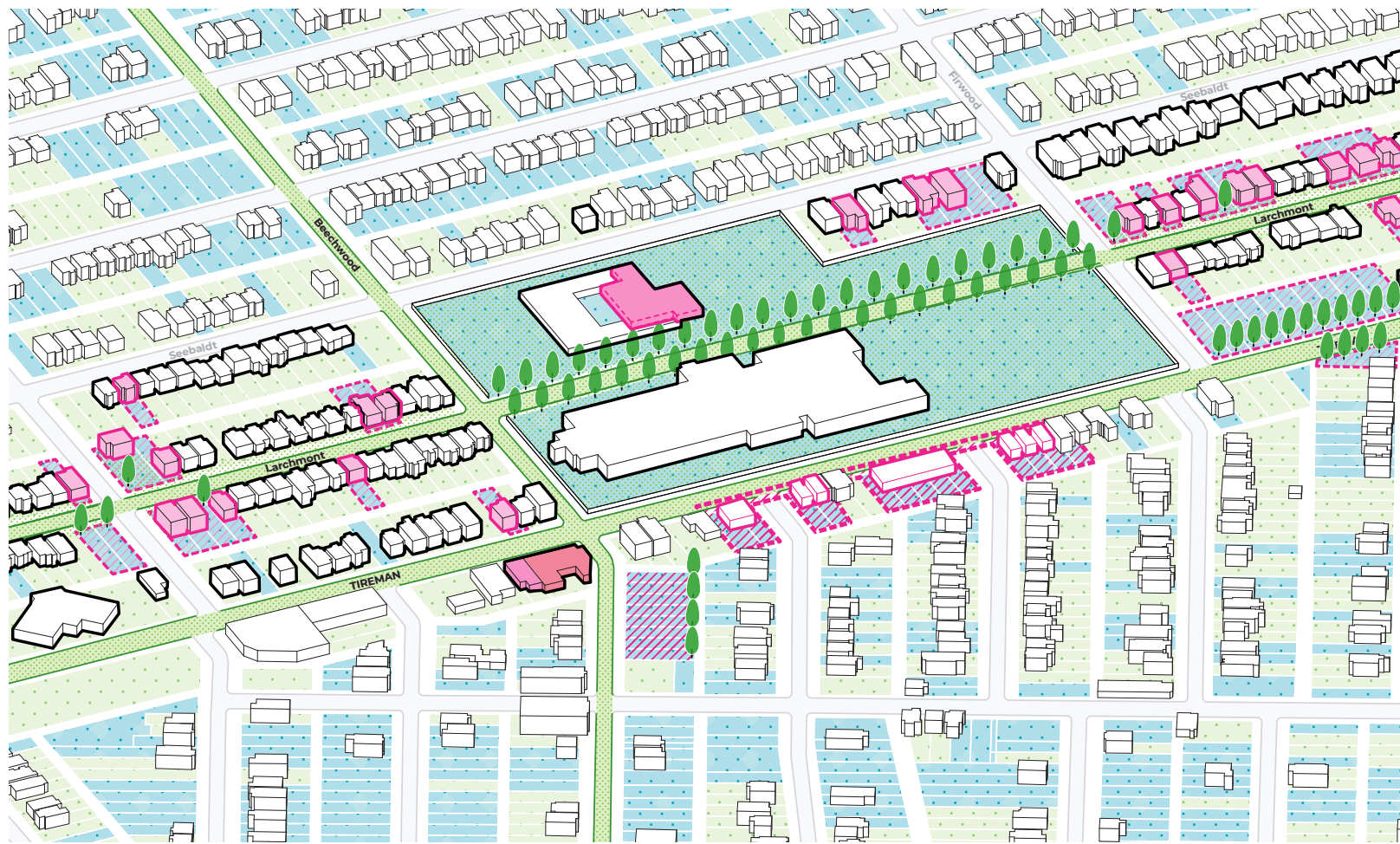
The site, however, is more than large enough to fit these amenities, with plenty of room left over.

With this in mind, the Framework recommends that the City explore other, restorative uses of the land that promote neighborhood sustainability and economic growth.

In the meantime, the City should prioritize street improvements that make it easier, safer, and more pleasant for residents to access existing parks. Temporary traffic calming measures, planting, and improved lighting and signage would all contribute to this goal.

The City should also continue to support neighborhood organizations that focus on open space, planting, and sustainability; and support programming and temporary pop-up events at existing neighborhood parks.

THE LEARNING & HEALING HUB: SAMPSON-WEBBER, BIDDLE, AND MORE!

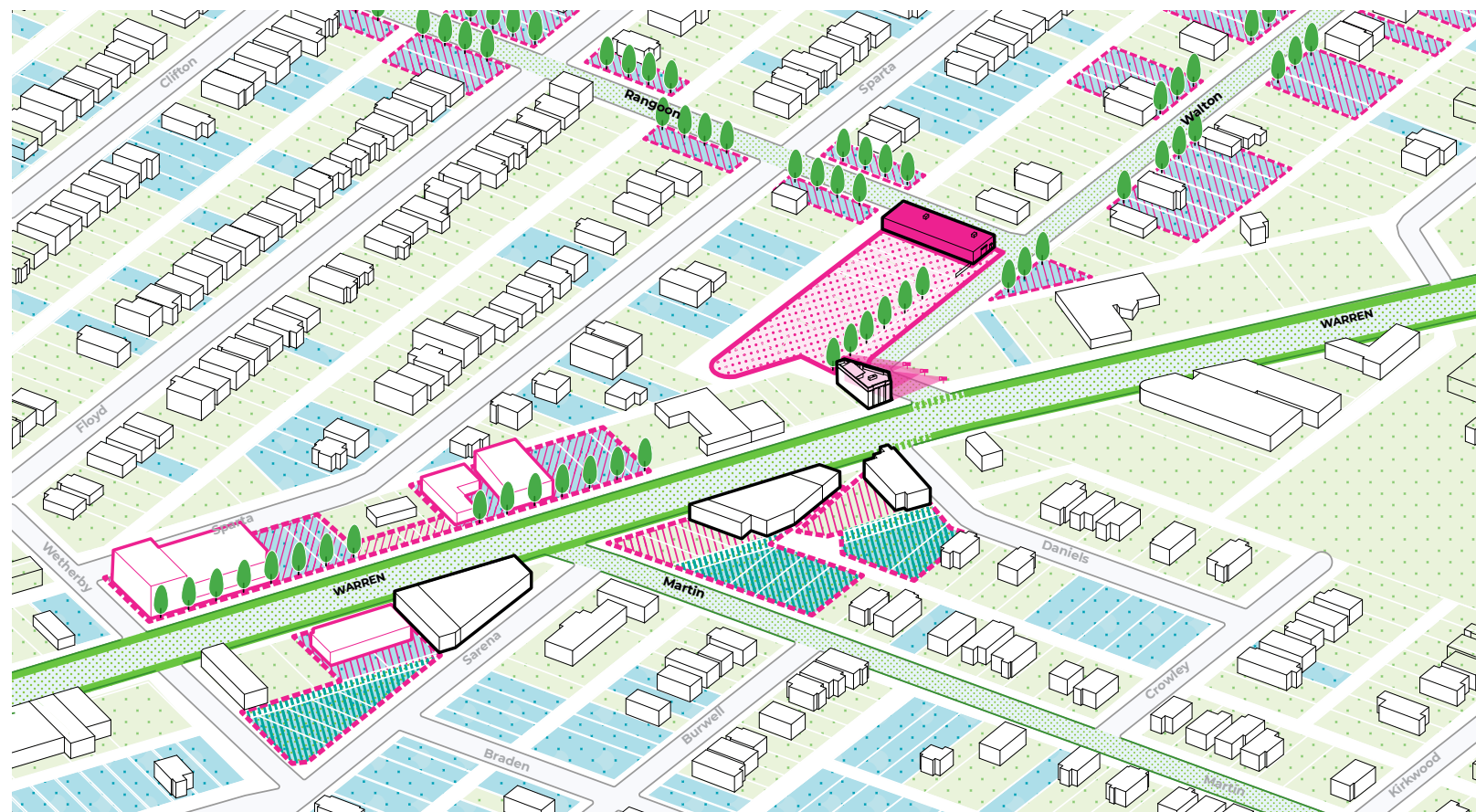


Building Neighborhood Stability on Larchmont & Tireman

The Learning and Healing Hub focuses on building and strengthening neighborhood stability. The Hub is centered around the Sampson-Webber Leadership Academy—the only active school in the neighborhood—as well as Larchmont and Tireman Streets, where there are many intact, occupied single-family homes and duplexes, along with active local churches, such as Luz Del Mundo, Ark of Deliverance, and Greater Apostolic Church. These represent major neighborhood assets that can be strengthened with strategic moves.

On Larchmont, the Framework recommends that the vacant City-owned homes be prioritized for repair, and that the City considers a tree-lined, pedestrian "cut-through" that stitches the street together. Additionally, the Framework identifies the former Biddle school building as a potential site for a new community rec center, focused on youth programming.

THE RESILIENCY HUB: SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH AT EQUITY ALLIANCE



Kickstarting Economic Growth in the Neighborhood

The Resiliency Hub builds upon the activity at Equity Alliance, a key community anchor, along with active and developing businesses, such as Cray's Hardware Store, Tru Point Machining, Meade Distributing, and the ongoing rehabilitation project of the bank building on Warren as key commercial and economic assets. This hub responds to the neighborhood need for job training as well as economic growth and community gathering space.

By supporting Equity Alliance's efforts through programming and outdoor space improvements; by improving the streetscape on Warren and piloting new programs to support businesses; and by marketing City-owned sites for mixed-use development in the long-term, this Hub can kickstart a larger process of revitalization on Warren.

SPOTLIGHT: PARTNERS, PROGRAMS, AND LOCAL BUSINESSES!

The following "ads" have been created, adapted, and/or stylized for the purposes of this newspaper. Readers are encouraged to search for, visit, and/or contact the listed businesses, partners, and programs for more information!

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