

INSTITUTIONAL ADAPTIVE BUILDING REUSE

Giving new life to Detroit's institutional buildings:
The anchors of culture, character, and fabric of our neighborhoods



WHAT ARE WE CONSIDERING:

Code amendments to allow the reuse of public, civic, and institutional buildings

BEFORE



3396 Vinewood

AFTER



ADDING ADAPTIVE REUSE OPPORTUNITIES

Libraries

Fire or police stations

Post offices

Courthouses

Schools & educational institutions

Religious institutions & religious residential

Utility buildings



WHY...

- Supports new housing efforts
- Expedites investment as an individual rezoning for each institutional building burdens each proposal with time and money spent
- Allows a variety of redevelopment options to accommodate the unique challenges of adaptive reuse
- Promotes redevelopment activities that serve the day-to-day needs of local residents
- Reduces annual demolition costs by making it easier to reuse institutional anchors within residential communities
- Supports neighborhood investments with increased redevelopment opportunities

The New York Times

For Sale: Hundreds of Abandoned Churches. Great Prices. Need Work.

As church congregations across the United States wither and disappear, the buildings they leave behind are becoming private homes.

FOSTERING SUCCESS





BEFORE – 609 E. Kirby



BEFORE 2220 Gratiot



AFTER



AFTER



BEFORE 10103 Kercheval Ave



BEFORE 3506 Gratiot



AFTER



AFTER



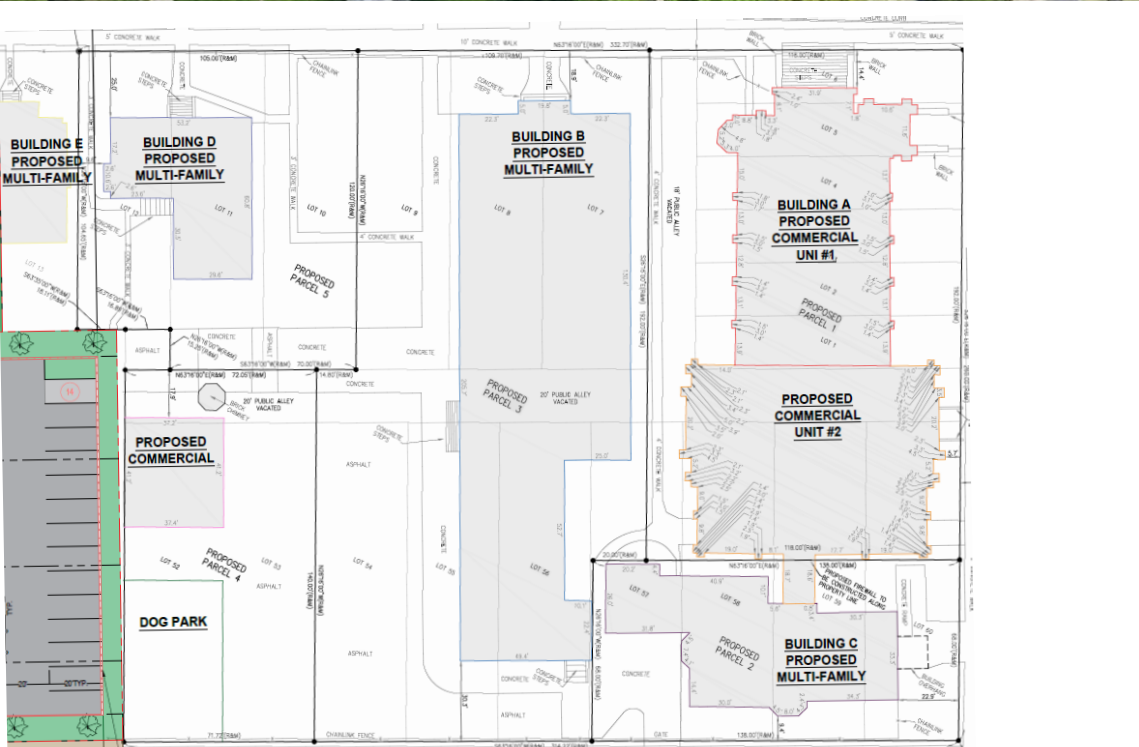
ELIMINATES THE NEED FOR REZONING

St Agnes Church was recently rezoned from R3 to SD1 buildings to be redeveloped as:

residential,

cultural center,

and office



13300 Syracuse Transfiguration School

The former school has been redeveloped into 19 low-income apartments.

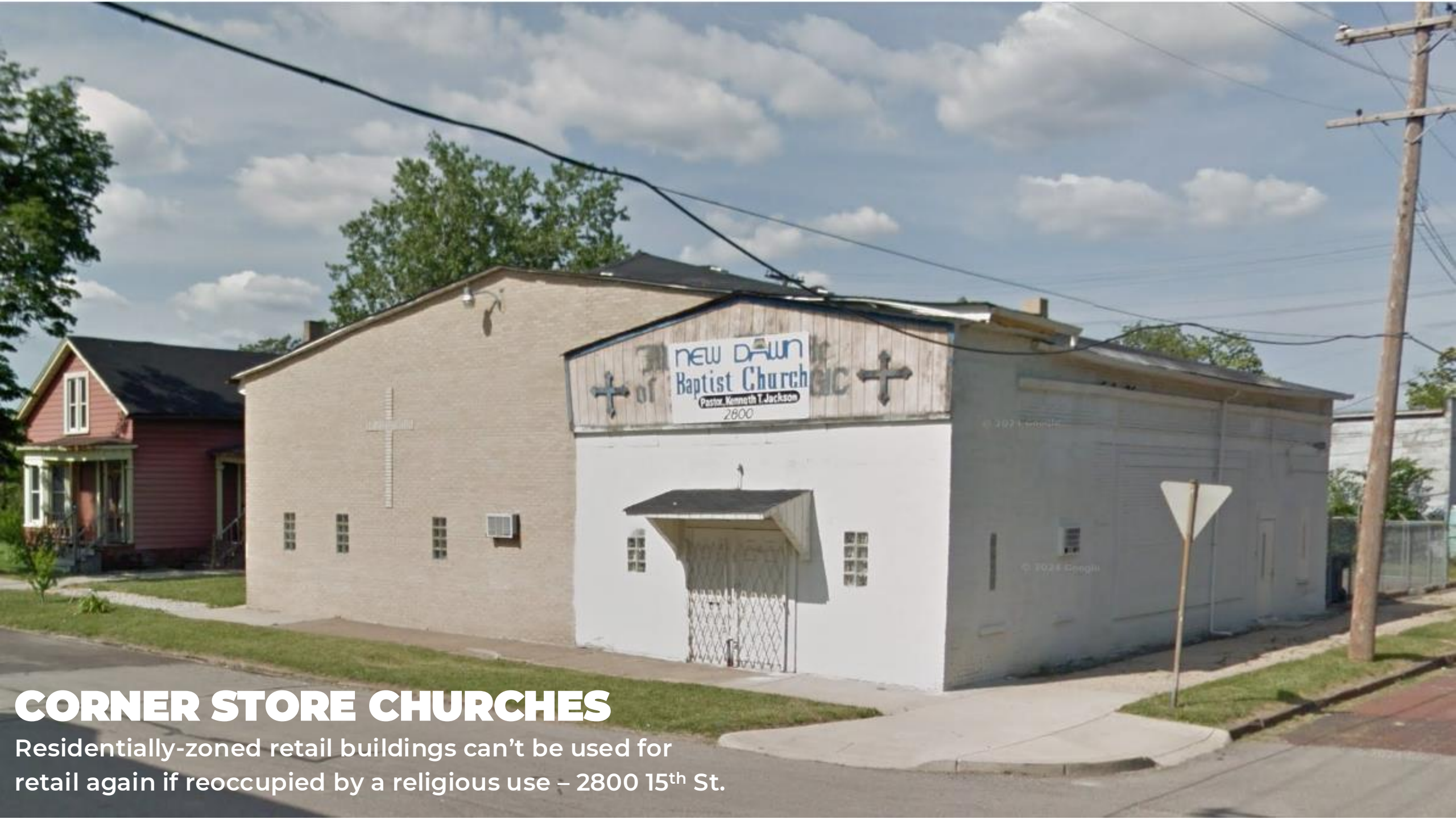
This redevelopment is permitted (conditionally) under our current School Building Adaptive Reuse Ordinance



Surplus PLD Stations

These former utility buildings are zoned R2 (4829 Lawton St.) and R3 (532 Custer).





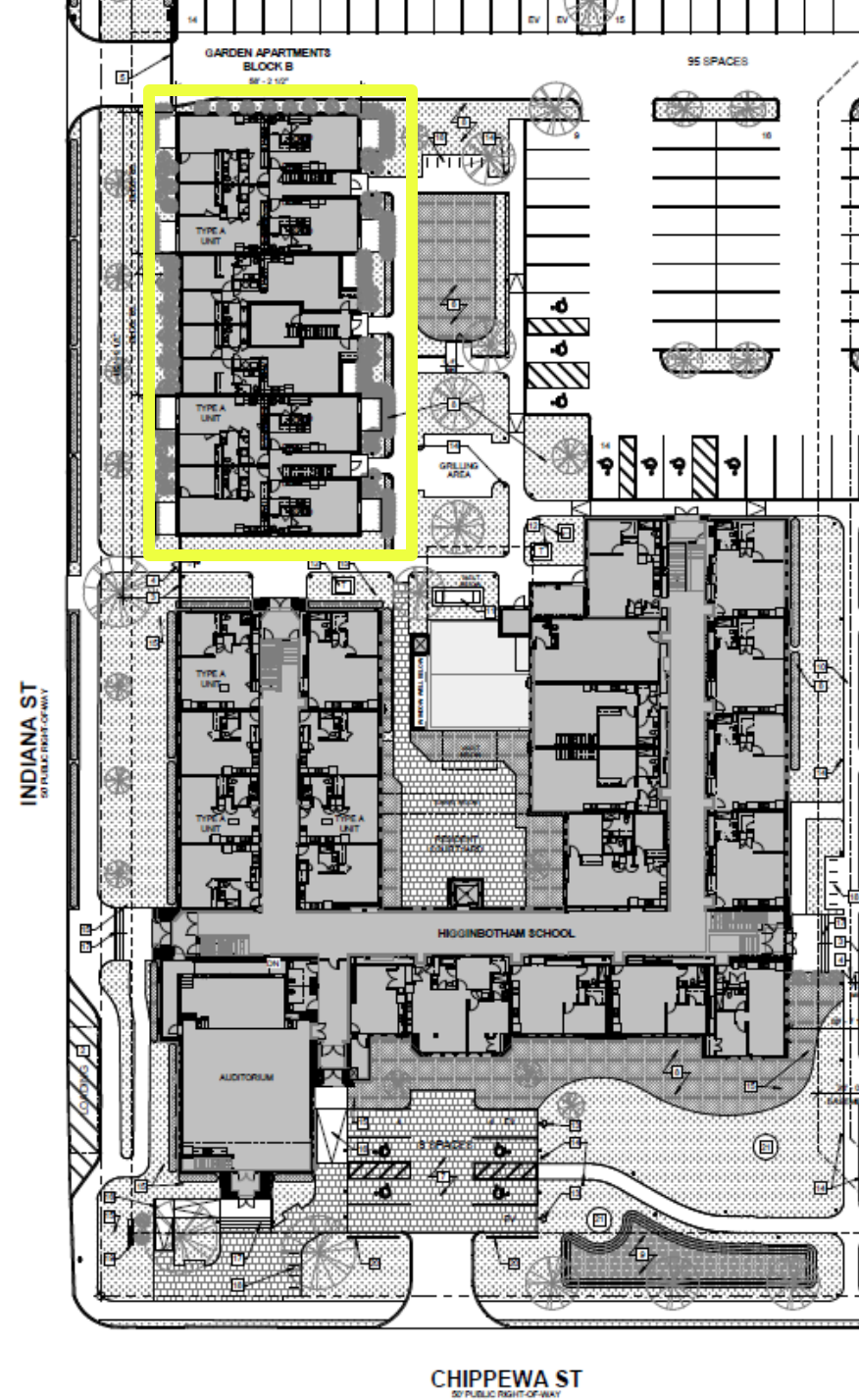
CORNER STORE CHURCHES

Residentially-zoned retail buildings can't be used for retail again if reoccupied by a religious use – 2800 15th St.

NEW RESIDENTIAL ON THE SITE



Higginbotham school
2019 Wisconsin St., Rezoned from R1 to R3



SUPPORT NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING EFFORTS

Lewis College of Business
(17334 Meyers)

Required rezoning from R1 to R3 to permit new residential development.

Ordinance would permit
without a rezoning



50 Conditional Uses, such as:

⚠️ All Require a Special Land Use Hearing

Residential & Institutional

- Apartment
- Apartments (new construction on sites)
- Neighborhood center for non-profits
- Child caring institution and adult day care
- Dance, art, or cooking school
- Assisted living
- Educational institution

Commercial

- Nail salon
- Barber/beauty shop
- Bake shop
- Restaurant without a drive-thru
- Office
- Small brewpub or bar (<3,000 sf)
- Art Gallery
- Retail

Manufacturing

- Clothing, leather good, & jewelry mfg
- Food catering establishment
- Trade service (plumbing, HVAC, cabinet shops)
- Food product mfg/processing (excl. meat or slaughtering)
- Candy mfg.
- Public storage facilities

HOW...

Guiding principles for Institutional Adaptive Reuse in neighborhoods:

- Will add to the vibrancy of the neighborhood
- Fulfills the day-to-day needs for good & services of the surrounding community
- Creates opportunity for employment for those within the neighborhood
- Won't create burdensome traffic
- Local community gets say in the process

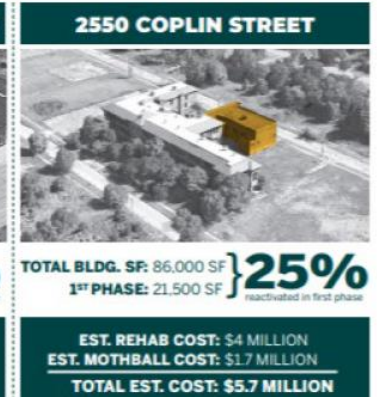


OTHER PROVISIONS


- Parking and Loading reduction of 50% and can be located up to $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away
- Encourage preservation by requiring >75% of the building be retained

TACTICAL PRESERVATION

A building reuse strategy focused on the **partial and incremental** reuse of existing buildings through a Buildings & Safety (BSEED) process to ensure that the properties can be activated in a safe, efficient, environmentally sound, aesthetically responsive manner via modifications to development standards.



Step 0 If Needed—Make Safe Permit



Application Items should include:

- Scope of Work
- Any Site Work
- Footing Stabilization
- Zoning Details
- Fire Concerns

If needed to enter the building for deeper analysis. Size of space, proposed uses, Occupancy, Temporary or Permanent? Expand/future Phases

Buildings, Safety Engineering & Environmental Department
2 Woodward Ave.
Suite 409

Step 1 Intake Form Application



Application Scope Items to be review for eligibility to Include:

- Intended/Desired Use (s)
 - Current Zoning
 - Total Building Area
- Percentage of Building Intended/Desired or Activation
 - Project Narrative
- Estimated Time Frame/Schedule of Activation (s)
- Preliminary Plan Review (PPR)

Phone Numbers:
Property Maintenance: (313) 628-2451
Plan Review/Permits: (313) 224-0297

Step 2 Get Started



Actual Building Permit Application

Depending on results of Intake Application, Site Plan review and/or Special Land Use may be required

Projects that has more than **5,000** square feet of gross floor area and/or land, except that, on land zoned M1, M2, M3, M4 or M5, the threshold for industrial uses shall be 50,000 square feet of gross floor area and or land;

Applications for proposed permitting that meet any one or more of the applicability criteria in this section shall be reviewed through the Tactical Preservation process. Developments that do not meet any of the applicability criteria in this section shall be reviewed by the Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department through its standard permitting process.

WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?





**INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS ARE THE
ANCHORS OF NEIGHBORHOODS**
ALEXANDER MACOMB ELEMENTARY



2009



**AS THESE ANCHORS GO,
SO GOES THE NEIGHBORHOODS**
ALEXANDER MACOMB ELEMENTARY



2018



**ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THESE ANCHORS
CAN PRESERVE THE NEIGHBORHOOD FABRIC**
ALEXANDER MACOMB ELEMENTARY



2024

Amending Adaptive Reuse Ordinance

- For Schools, Libraries, Fire or police stations, Post offices, Courthouses, Religious or Utility buildings
- Adds commercial use options to these Institutional Buildings when zoned Residential (typically R1 or R2)

Will also allow:

1. Tactical Preservation: occupying a smaller footprint of a larger building
2. Reduction of parking requirements for reuse
3. Allows new construction multifamily when school or building is preserved

ENGAGEMENT

LEGAL REVIEW

Jan. – Apr.

May – June

June - July

Sept- Oct

PLANNING COMMISSION

COUNCIL
HRG. AND
VOTE

- Developer stakeholder discussion: Mar 2025
- Resident stakeholder discussion: Apr 2025
- Council Briefings: Mar/Apr 2025
- DONCast Meetings: Apr 2025

ELIMINATES THE NEED FOR A REZONING



Supports new housing efforts

Removes need for an individual rezoning for each institutional building

Provides more redevelopment options to accommodate unique challenges of adaptive reuse

Promotes redevelopment options that serve the day-to-day needs of local residents

Supports neighborhood investments by increasing redevelopment opportunities

May reduce annual demolition costs by offering more opportunities to reuse institutional anchors

INCENTIVE PROGRAMS	WHAT IT DOES	TERM	RESOURCE LINK
Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act (OPRA – PA146)	Freezes the existing taxable value of an obsolete building while you invest in rehab; new value isn't taxed for the life of the certificate	Up to 12 yrs	https://www.degc.org/tax-incentives
Commercial Rehabilitation Act (CRA – PA210)	Same concept but aimed at commercial or multifamily rehab (not single-family)	1-10 yrs	https://www.degc.org/tax-incentives
Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ) – Rehab Certificate	Slashes the structure portion of property tax for residential units created in the reuse	12 yrs (15–17 yrs in historic districts)	https://www.degc.org/tax-incentives
BROWNFIELD & TAX-INCREMENT TOOLS	WHAT IT PAYS FOR	PAY-BACK SOURCE	RESOURCE LINK
Detroit Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (DBRA) – PA381 TIF	Environmental cleanup, asbestos abatement, selective demo, site prep, some hard costs (parking, utilities)	Capture of the new local & state taxes you generate, up to 30–35 yrs	https://www.degc.org/tax-incentives
DIRECT GRANTS & GAP-FINANCING POOLS	TYPICAL AWARD	BEST FOR	RESOURCE LINK
Motor City Match – Build & Cash Tracks	Up to \$100k (some CVI awards up to \$150k)	Interior build-outs for street-level commercial; code upgrades	https://www.detroitmeansbusiness.org/financial-resources
Motor City Re-Store	Up to \$25k per round (Design + Cash)	Exterior/façade rehab of existing businesses	https://www.detroitmeansbusiness.org/financial-resources
Strategic Neighborhood Fund (SNF)	Soft-second loans and/or small grants; sized case-by-case	Mixed-use rehabs in priority corridors (Grand River, Islandview, EEV, etc.)	https://investdetroit.com/strategic-neighborhood-fund/
Detroit Housing for the Future Fund (DHFF)	Low-interest subordinate debt + limited grants	60% AMI-and-below apartments created through reuse	https://dhff.org/
HRD Special-Projects NOFA (HOME/CDBG)	Gap loans or forgivable grants (often \$500k–\$2 M)	Affordable or mixed-income reuse projects	https://detroitmi.gov/departments/housing-and-revitalization-department/nonprofits-and-community-groups/neighborhood-opportunity-fund
STATE PROGRAMS	FORM	TYPICAL SIZE	RESOURCE LINK
Michigan Community Revitalization Program (MCRP)	Grant or performance-based loan	Up to 25 % of total eligible cost (often \$1–10 M)	https://www.miplace.org/developers/
Revitalization & Placemaking (RAP) Grant	Grant	Up to \$5 M	https://www.michiganbusiness.org/rap/
State Historic Tax Credit	25 % refundable credit	Capped annually statewide	https://www.miplace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/historic-preservation-tax-credits/

THANK YOU!



Kimani Jeffrey
City planner

City Planning Commission
jeffreyk@detroitmi.gov
(313) 224-6376

Greg Moots
Lead planner

Planning and Development Department
greg@detroitmi.gov
(313) 224-1358

Visit www.detroitmi.gov/adaptivereuse
for more information.

Category	Use	Category	Use
Residential Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted living facility Child caring institution Convalescent, nursing, or rest home Loft Apartment (new construction may be permitted on site) 	Retail, Service and Commercial Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office Printing shops Radio or television station Recording studio or photo studio or video studio Recreation, indoor commercial and health club Restaurant without drive-up Dance, gymnastics, music, art or cooking school Shoe repair shop Retail store without drive through Veterinary clinic for small animals Youth hostel/hostel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governmental service agency Educational institution Adult day care center Boarding school and dormitory Child care center Library Museum Neighborhood center, non profit 		
Public, civic, and institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal grooming shop Art gallery Bake shop, retail Bank without Drive-up Barber or beauty shop or Nail Salon Bed and breakfast inn Body art facility Brewpub or microbrewery Business college or commercial trade school Dry cleaning, laundry or laundromat Bar Medical or dental clinic, physical therapy or massage clinic 	Manufacturing and Industrial Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confection manufacture Food catering establishment Jewelry manufacture Lithographing and sign shop Low-impact manufacturing or processing (Limited) Low/Medium-Impact manufacturing or processing Trade services, general Wearing apparel manufacturing Public storage facilities
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aquaculture Aquaponics Hydroponics
Retail, Service and Commercial Uses		Agricultural Uses	