



**PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 808
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Phone 313•224•1339
www.detroitmi.gov

SR-1 – SUMMARY STAFF REPORT (03/27/2026)

This report, prepared by staff, summarizes the proposed scope of work, the existing conditions at the property, and any factual background information. No PDD/HDC staff analysis/opinion is included.

ADDRESS: 1545 WOODWARD AVENUE

MEETING DATE: 04/08/2026

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2026-00117

HISTORIC DISTRICT: LOWER WOODWARD AVENUE

APPLICANT/OWNER: MIKE ESSIAN, HIMELHOCH UNIT 1 2017, LLC

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 03/16/2026

DATE(S) OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 03/19/2026

SCOPE PHRASE FOR AGENDA: REPLACE RECESSED ENTRANCE PLASTER CEILING WITH GYPSUM BOARD CEILING

PUBLIC HEARING PER 21-2-77: NO

SUMMARY OF SCOPE OF WORK:

Based on staff review of the submitted documents, the following work is proposed:

- **Remove plaster ceiling from the Woodward Avenue’s recessed entrance**
- **Install gypsum board ceiling, paint**

MISSING INFORMATION, CLARIFICATION, OR OTHER ITEMS RELATING TO A COMPLETE SCOPE OF WORK:

Missing

- Photos of entire ceiling surface documenting its condition prior to installation of scaffolding. *Applicant replied he could not take pictures of the ceiling prior to the scaffolding being erected.*

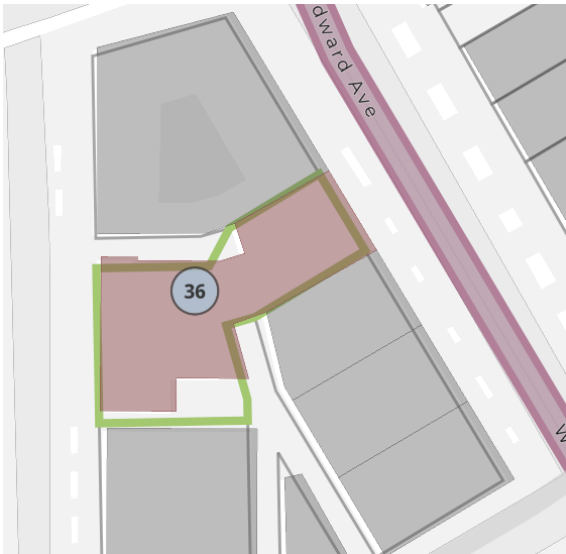
EXISTING CONDITIONS:

- The seven-story building has two facades, one on Washington Boulevard and the other on Woodward Avenue. The building is sheathed in limestone, with exception of the first three floors at Woodward which are clad in black granite. The verticality of the building is articulated through multiple designs and height of pilasters. The building’s horizontality is emphasized by a string course above the second and third floors, heavily detailed brackets, crests, lion’s heads, oculus windows, a denticulated string course at the sixth floor, and cornice with dentils that is topped with copper finials.
- The ground floor of the Woodward Avenue façade features a centrally placed wide, recessed entrance with a barrel vault decorative ceiling; interior walls are extended storefronts with large expanses of clear glass. Three entrances at the building wall consist of a central

revolving door opening which is enclosed with a three-sided storefront system; an operational single door mullied with one sidelight is located on either side of the central opening. The entrance doors, sidelights and storefront system have clear glass within the frames.



Staff photo, Woodward Avenue recessed building entrance, 03/19/2026



Detroit Base Unit Tools Map

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- HDC staff issued a COA in 2020 (20-6621) for the façade restoration at the Woodward and Washington Boulevard walls, and included replacement of stone masonry that had deteriorated beyond repair, in-kind replacement of commercial storefronts and doors, cleaning of metal lettering, and specifically at the Woodward wall – removal of non-historic awnings and repair/painting of plaster ceiling to match existing details including pattern and color.
 - During staff’s recent site visit for this application, it was noticed that the Woodward Avenue lettering: HIMELHOCH BROTHERS AND COMPANY, was not reinstalled. Staff identified this violation and inquired with the applicant on the status of the letters’ reinstallation.
- HDC staff issued a COA in 2025 (HDC2025-00256) for the installation of signage on the Woodward and Washington Boulevard facades related to the “Museum of Illusions”.

DISTRICT INFORMATION/SIGNIFICANCE:

- The HDAB Final Report for the Lower Woodward Avenue Historic District, completed in 2001, states that the district's Period of Significance is 1886 – 1941. The report notes that the contributing/non-contributing status of the buildings within the district coincided with the Grand Circus Park NRHP Nomination Form, completed in 1983. However, please note that in 2012, the National Park Service updated the Grand Circus Park historic context and extended its Period of Significance to 1962. Therefore, staff is using the extended Period of Significance, 1886 - 1962 for this report.
- Link to [Lower Woodward Avenue Historic District Elements of Design](#)
- Erected in 1901, however later alterations were made to the facades:
 - Woodward Avenue (first through third floors and recessed entrance), completed ca. early 1920s
 - Washington Boulevard (first and second floors), ca. 1946.
- Contributing structure

REPORT PREPARED BY: AD