BREWSTER HOMES COMMUNITY MEETING

December 17th, 2025

DHC
DETROIT HOUSING COMMISSION

01 Environmental *Updates*

02 *12/16 Meeting Recap*

03 Street Grid Concept #1

04 *Resident Feedback*

05 *Questions?*

06 *What happens next?*

ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

Brewster Homes Environmental Update

12/17/2025



12/16 Meeting Recap

Q: Will this project include resident relocation?

- A project of this size will require some form of **temporary relocation** to allow construction activities to occur in a phased approach.
- DHC seeks to **contain all temporary location activities to the existing Brewster Homes site** by using vacant units to **maximize one-way moves** to your final new unit when possible.
- **DHC will continue to proactively communicate project updates** to the residents and will communicate relocation impacts many months in advance.
- **DHC will cover all moving expenses**, including packing materials and movers.
- If everything runs smoothly, DHC anticipates that the timeline to the resident relocation moves is **18-24 months away**.

DHC
DETROIT HOUSING COMMISSION

BREWSTER HOMES – (*11/18/25) Meeting Recap*

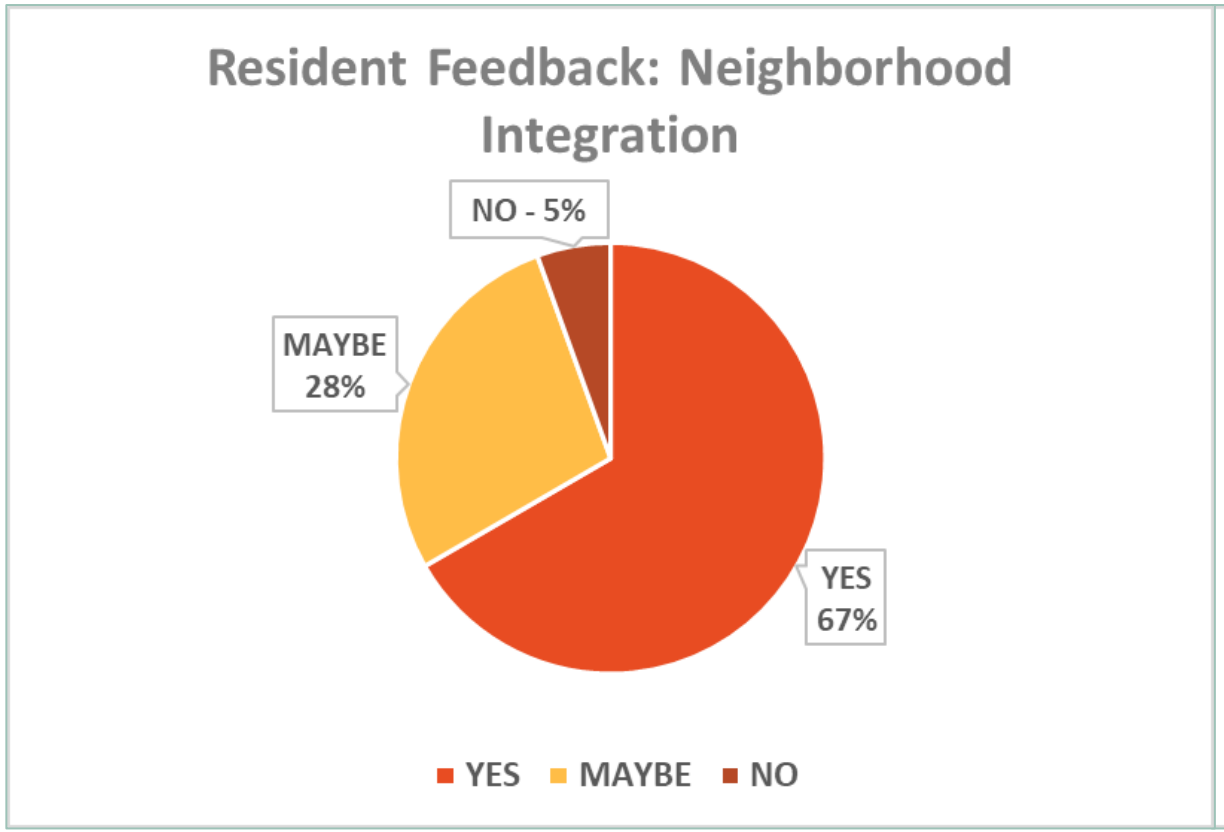
During the November 18th meeting, DHC explained a series of key ***Development concepts and terms*** *using the question…*

What does DHC mean by _____?

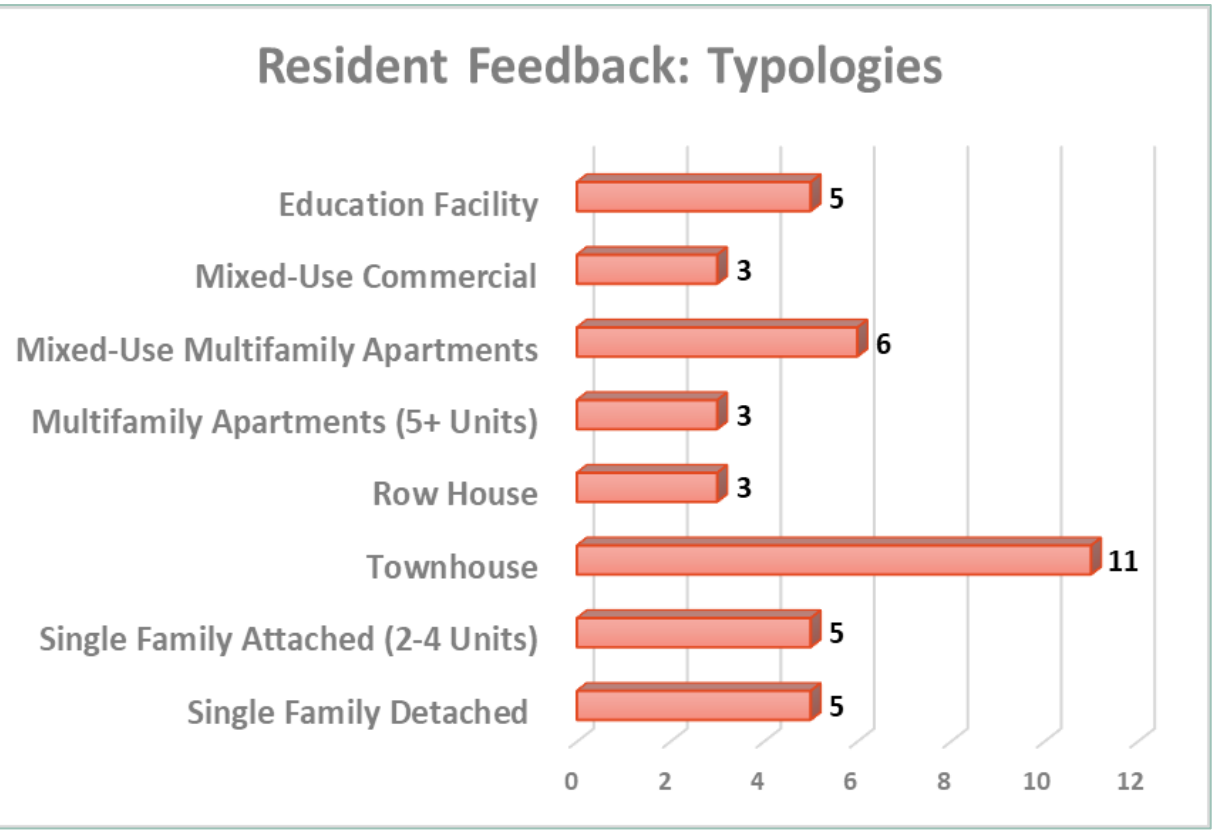
1. ***Relocation***
2. ***Predevelopment Planning***
3. ***Neighborhood Context***
4. ***Connected vs Disconnected Neighborhood***
5. ***Street Grid***
6. ***Building Typologies***

BREWSTER HOMES – (11/18/2025) Resident Survey Results

Do you like the concept of an integrated neighborhood and improved street grid?



What Building Typologies would you want to be included in redevelopment planning?

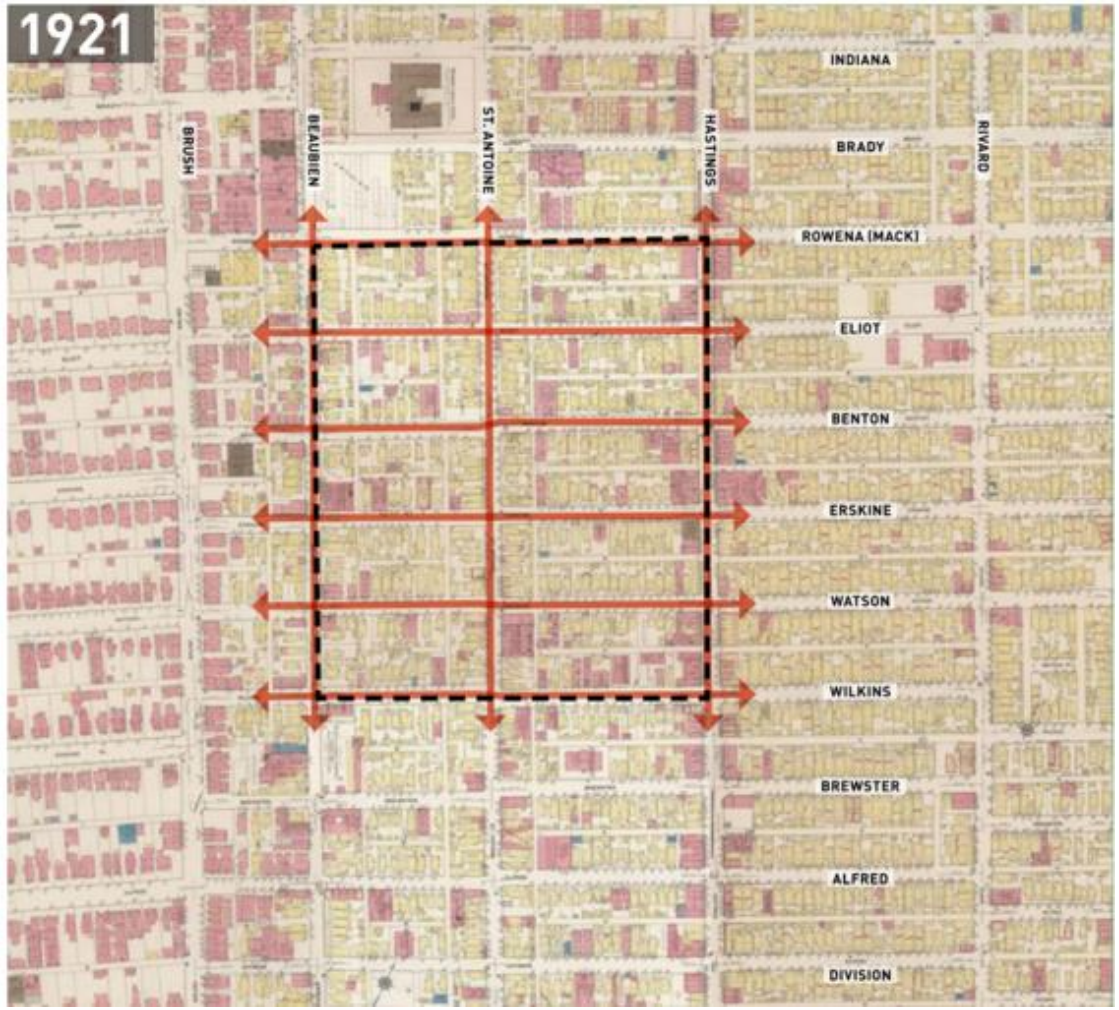


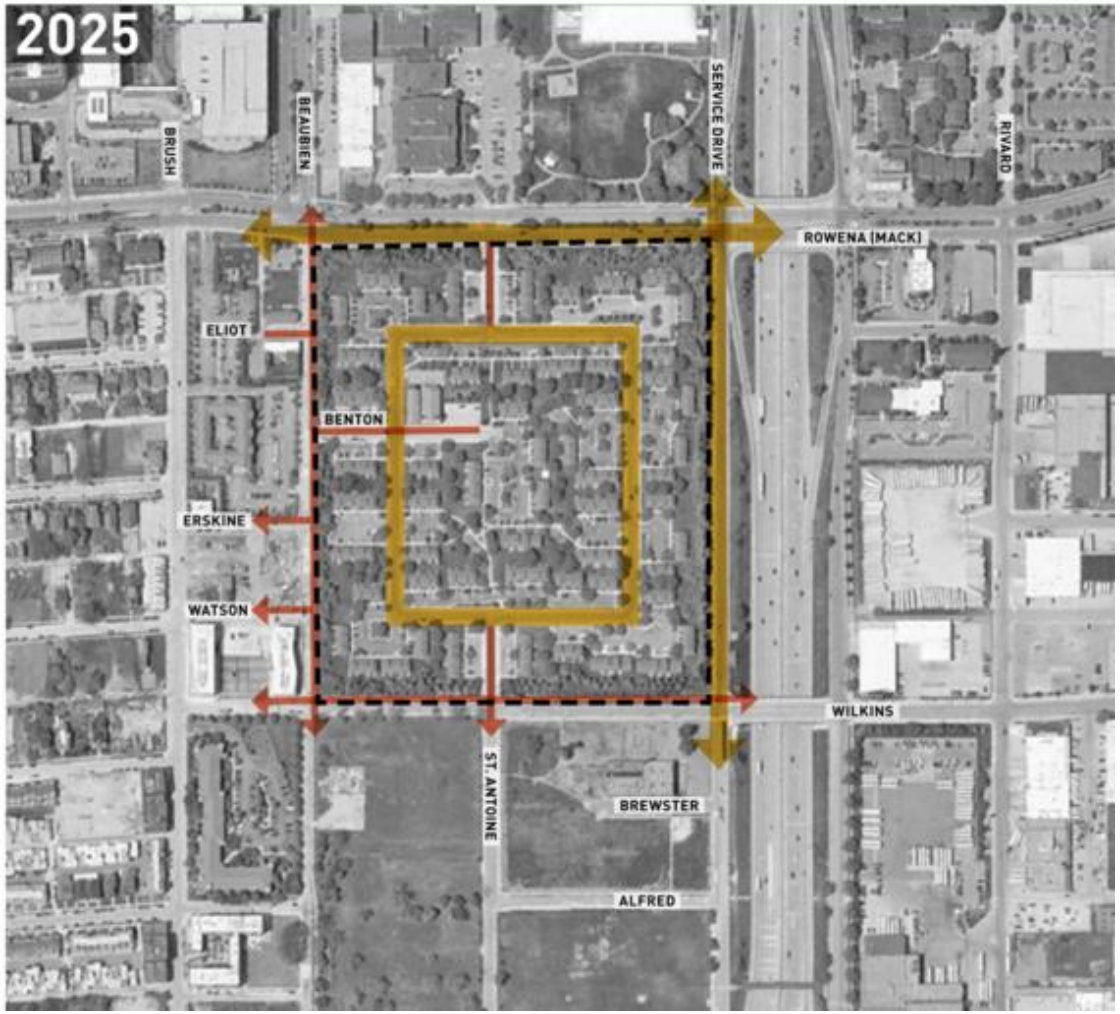
What do you want most in your new unit?

- Working Appliances
- Privacy Fence/ Backyard
- Finished Basement
- Better Interior Lighting
- Crime Cameras
- Intercoms
- Paint
- Modern Senior Living
- In-Unit Laundry
- Dog Park
- Day care
- Playground/ Parks
- Resident Computer Room
- Resident Community Rooms
- Existing Units Options
- Private Unit Entry
- Larger Bedrooms
- Central Air
- Designated Parking Spots
- Repaired Streets
- New Floors/ Paint
- Open Concept Kitchen
- Higher Occupancy
- Game day Street Access

CONNECTED STREET GRID
CONCEPT #1

Neighborhood History

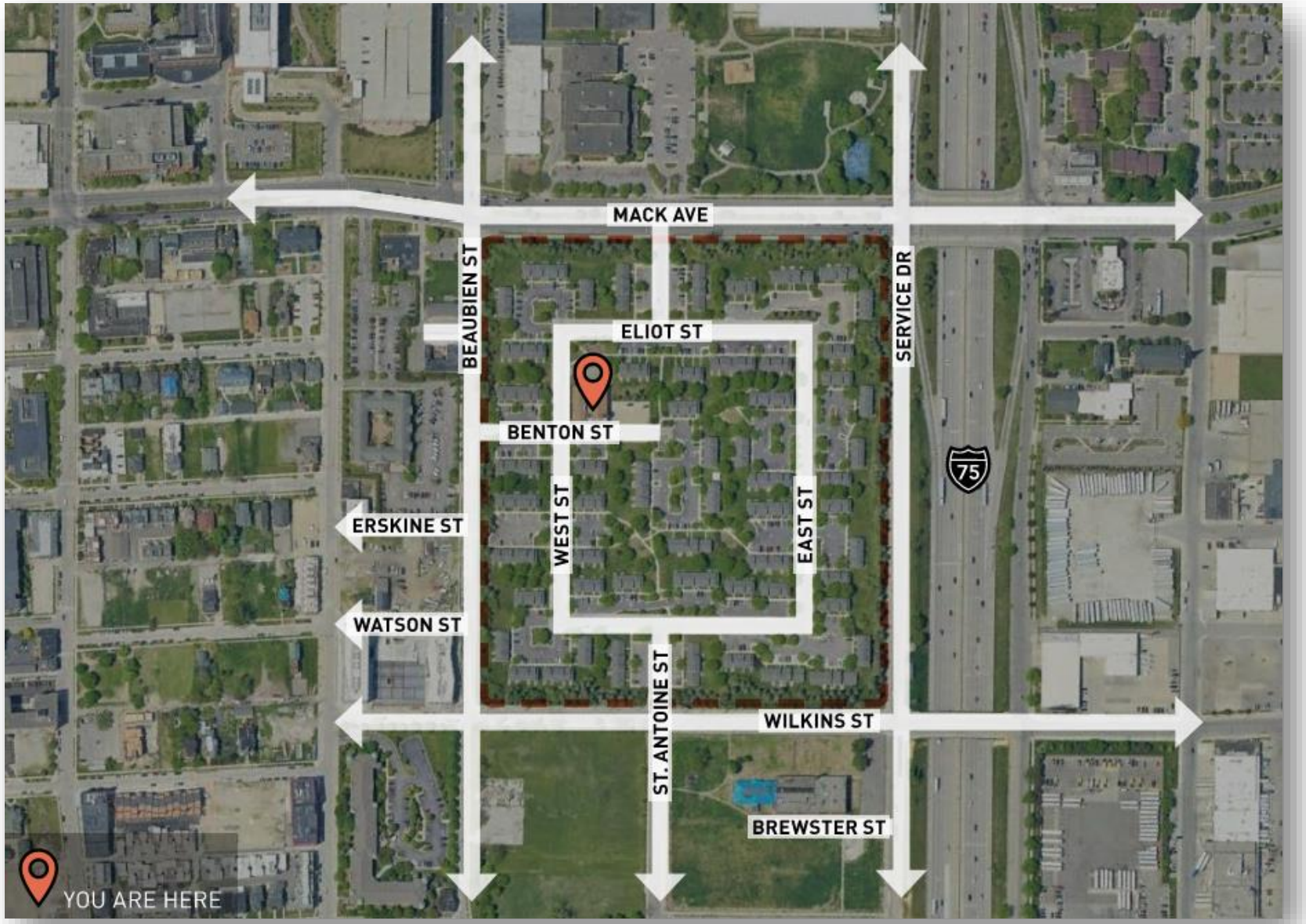




BREWSTER HOMES – Connected Street Grid Concept #1

Existing Street Grid

- **External Access Points:** (3)
- Street Types: (1)
- No defined neighborhood blocks and a large number of circulation stagnation points, reducing “eyes” on the street.
- Difficult for visitors, deliveries, and emergency services to navigate.
- Lack of external street and sidewalk connection is causing neighborhood isolation.



Integrated Neighborhood Concept #1

- **External Access Points:** (8)
- **Street Types:** (3)
- Strong integration of streets and sidewalks to adjacent blocks to eliminate isolation.
- Defined neighborhood blocks and reduced circulation stagnation points.
- Increased “eyes” on each street block and better lighting.
- Easier for visitors, deliveries, and emergency services to navigate.



BREWSTER HOMES – Integrated Neighborhood Concept #1

DESIGN CONCEPT

STREET NETWORK

NEIGHBORHOOD MAIN STREET, 50-FT ROW
ST. ANTOINE. MAINTAIN 50-FT TO PRESERVE (3) EXISTING TOWNHOME BUILDINGS ALONG ST. ANTOINE. 2-WAY TRAFFIC, ON-STREET PARALLEL PARKING ON BOTH SIDES, SIDEWALKS.

NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS, 50- OR 60-FT ROW
ELIOT, BENTON, WATSON, AND EAST. 2-WAY TRAFFIC, ON-STREET PARALLEL PARKING ON BOTH SIDES, AMENITY ZONE, SIDEWALKS.

RESIDENTIAL SHARED STREET, 30-FT ROW
MOTORISTS, BICYCLISTS, AND PEDSTRIANS UTILIZE THE STREET IN A 2-WAY FASHION WITHOUT CURBS OR LANE MARKINGS. PRIORITIZE THE PEDESTRIAN THROUGH MATERIALS, FURNISHINGS, AND OTHER DESIGN STRATEGIES. SEE https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/streets/residential-shared-street/

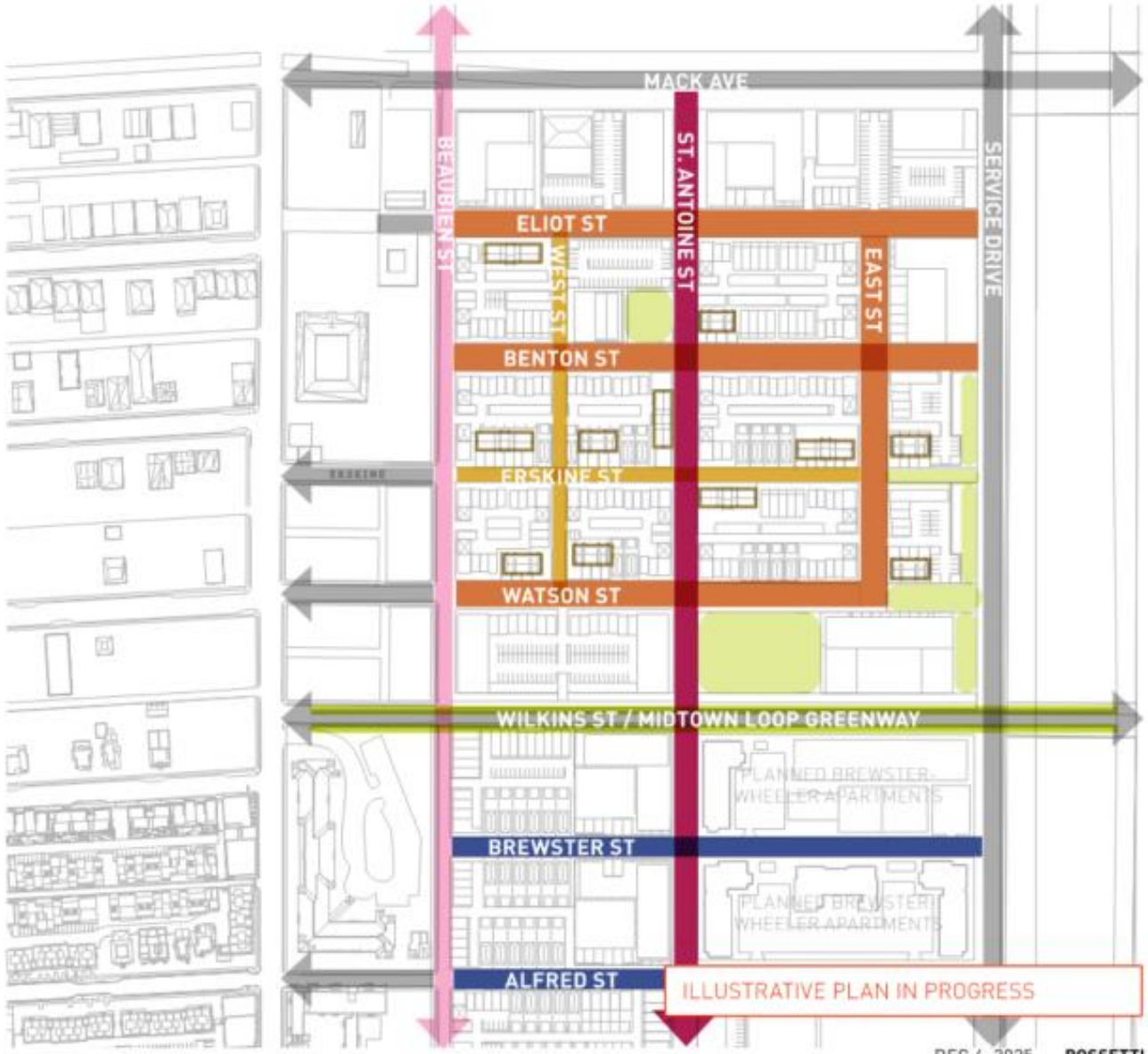
BEAUBIEN CONVERSION TO 2-WAY TRAFFIC
IMPROVE ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

PROPOSED STREETS OUTSIDE STUDY AREA
ALIGN WITH STREETS AT BREWSTER-WHEELER SITE AND THE BRUSH PARK NEIGHBORHOOD

EXISTING STREET, NO CHANGE

PROPOSED OPEN SPACE

PROPOSED PRESERVATION BUILDINGS



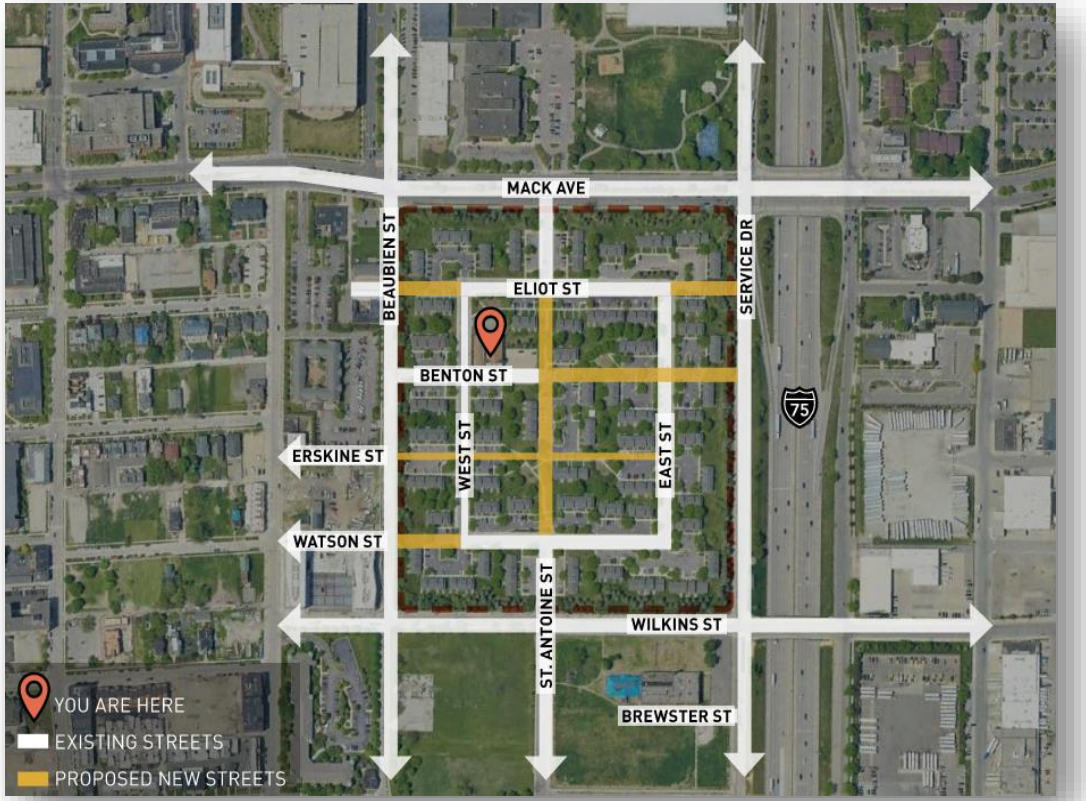
REIMAGINING BREWSTER HOMES | CONCEPT UPDATE

BREWSTER HOMES – Connected Street Grid Concept #1

Existing Neighborhood Street Grid



Neighborhood Street Grid *(Concept #1)*



Neighborhood Blocks Concept #1

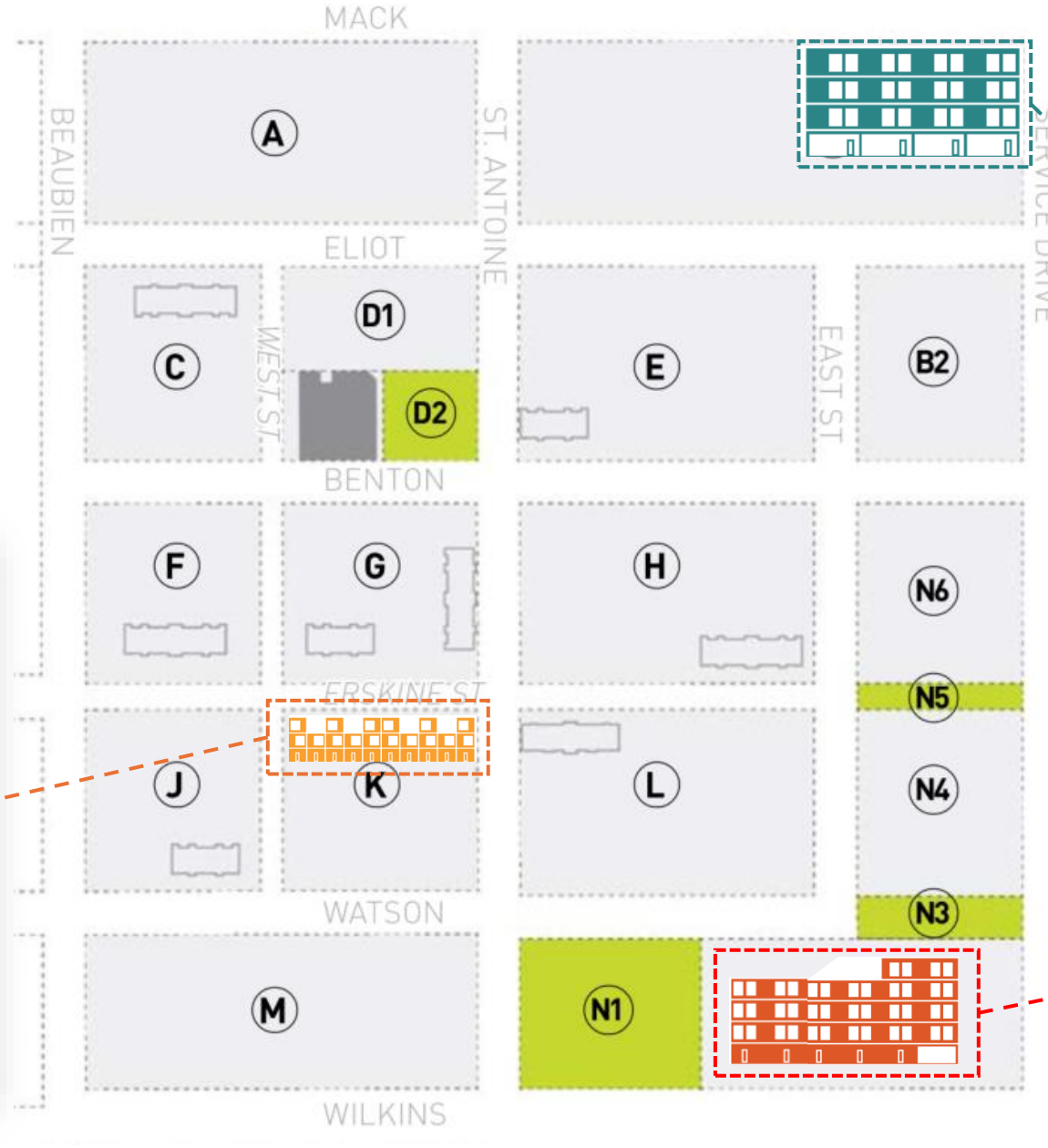
- **New Neighborhood Blocks:** (14)
- Neighborhood Blocks of several different sizes offer flexibility to design a range of different building typologies and public spaces.



Neighborhood Blocks Concept #1 – Next Steps

1. Finalize Connected Street Grid Concepts
2. Start deciding what Building typologies should remain.









RESIDENT FEEDBACK

BREWSTER HOMES – Resident Feedback Survey

NAME (First/Last) : _____ **EMAIL:** _____

1. Do you like the Integrated Neighborhood Concept #1?

- ☐ **YES**, I like the idea.
- ☐ **MAYBE**, but I need to learn more.
- ☐ **NO**, I do not like the idea.

2. What do you LIKE or DISLIKE about Integrated Neighborhood Concept #1.

3. From what directions do you often enter or exit the Neighborhood *(Check ALL that apply)*

- ☐ **North** (Mack Ave)
- ☐ **South** *(Wilkins)*
- ☐ **East** *(I-75 Service Drive)*
- ☐ **West** *(Beaubien)*

3. Do you go to Tolan Park (Across Mack)? *(Check ALL that apply)*

- ☐ **YES**, Often
- ☐ **YES**, Not Often
- ☐ **NO**, Mack is too busy
- ☐ **NO**, Not Interested

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

NEXT STEPS



Environmental Review

DHC will continue to execute the approved environmental plan and keep residents updated.



Development

DHC will work with Rossetti and Giffels Webster to continue to refine the **Integrated Neighborhood Concepts**.



Resident Engagement

DHC will continue the update meeting series and begin collecting resident feedback to inform a redevelopment plan.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR

1. **October 22, 2025** - Community Meeting #1
2. **November 19, 2025 *(Today)*** - Community Meeting #2
3. **December 17, 2025** - Community Meeting #3
4. **January 28, 2026 -** Community Meeting #4
5. **February 25, 2026 -** Community Meeting #5

How do I stay involved?

1. *Attend the next community meeting on **January 17th**. Invite your neighbors!*

2. *Come ready to participate and ask questions at each meeting.*

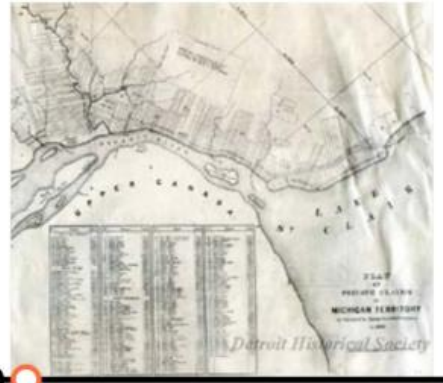
3. *Complete Surveys at each meeting to contribute to DHC Development planning and next steps.*

QUESTIONS?

APPENDIX

PLANNING CONTEXT

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY



1700s

Before the neighborhood's development in the 1800s, the land was occupied by multiple ribbon farms used for crop cultivation, orchards, and letting animals out to pasture, extending up to a mile and a half from the riverfront. Many streets running from the Detroit River follow ribbon farm boundaries and carry the names of the farm owners such as Brush and Beaubien.



1850s

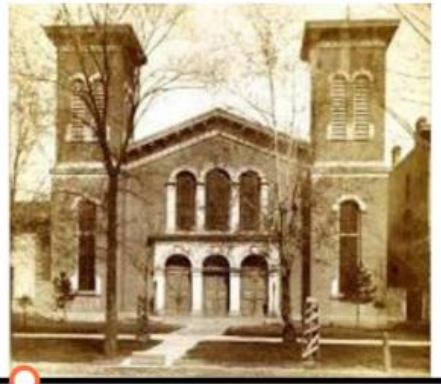
Nearby, Edmund Brush began developing his family's property into a neighborhood for Detroit's elite citizens which would become Brush Park.



19TH CENTURY

The site was home to a Jewish neighborhood consisting of dense, low-rise homes and a traditional, highly connected urban street grid and alley system.

The neighborhood shifted from Jewish to African American in the early 20th century.



1914-1923

The present Shiloh Baptist Church basement (1914) and upper structures (1923) were constructed on Benton Street and became the permanent home to the city's second black Baptist congregation serving residents north of Gratiot.

In 1935, Shiloh narrowly escaped demolition while the surrounding area was cleared to make room for the Brewster Housing Project.



1917-1929

The site that would become known as the Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center was originally constructed as the Bernard Ginsberg Library, a branch of the Detroit Public Library, in 1917. After the library closed, the Recreation Department constructed an addition to include a gymnasium, a pool, and clubhouse rooms and reopened the facility as the Central Community Center in 1929.

The facility was renamed the Brewster Recreation Center in 1936 when it became part of the Brewster public housing area.

PLANNING CONTEXT

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY



1935-1938

Federal funding was allocated to the Brewster Homes project to alleviate the housing shortage of Detroit's African American working poor. The 22-acre area — part of the neighborhood known as Paradise Valley — was identified by government officials as a "slum" and required the relocation of 718 families and many businesses. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt presided over the groundbreaking in 1935 and construction was completed in 1938 with 701 units in two- and four-story apartment buildings, becoming the first federally funded housing project in the country.



1941

An additional 240 housing units were constructed at the Brewster Homes site, bringing the total to 941 units.



1940s/1950s

South of Wilkins, the Frederick Douglass Homes were constructed in phases from 1942 to 1951 in response to more need for affordable housing. The complex included six 14-story towers, two 6-story apartment buildings, and 16 row houses.

Together with Brewster Homes and the Brewster Recreation Center, the area bounded by Mack to the north, Hastings to the east, Winder to the south, and Beaubien to the west was known as the Brewster-Douglass neighborhood. At its peak in the 1950s/60s, it housed an estimated 10,000 residents.



1950s/1960s

Planning and construction of the Detroit freeway system began in the 1950s, and the Chrysler Freeway directly adjacent to Brewster Homes officially opened in 1964.

During this time, highway construction and "urban renewal" projects in Detroit displaced up to 100,000 people and disrupted the historical street grid of neighborhoods, worsening pedestrian connectivity and neighborhood cohesion. With I-75 as the eastern border, Brewster Homes functions like an isolated community, where residents are disconnected from adjacent neighborhoods like Eastern Market and Downtown.



1990s

The original Brewster Homes was razed in 1990-1991 and replaced with 250 townhouses, which exist today.

PLANNING CONTEXT

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY



2000s

Despite several renovation efforts, the Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center and Douglass Homes experienced significant decline and were eventually closed due to reduction in funding and maintenance, a declining population, and a mixture of drugs, poverty, and crime.

At the Douglass Homes site, the two six-story apartment buildings were demolished in 2003. The remaining towers and row houses were demolished in 2014. The site sits vacant today.



2025-

After multiple false starts, Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center is slated for a massive renovation and the construction of low-income and supportive housing. When complete, the recreation center will once again be home to a boxing gym (expected 2025), auditorium, and offices, and four new apartment buildings will provide 211 units.



2029

The I-375 Reconnecting Communities Project proposes to transform the sunken highway into a street-level boulevard to rebuild neighborhood connections, expand access to key destinations, and create safer streets. MDOT's current schedule has construction slated to break ground in 2025 and be completed in 2029.

The portion of I-75 adjacent to Brewster Homes will be impacted and other changes outside the study area will likely impact transportation patterns in and around the neighborhood.



TODAY

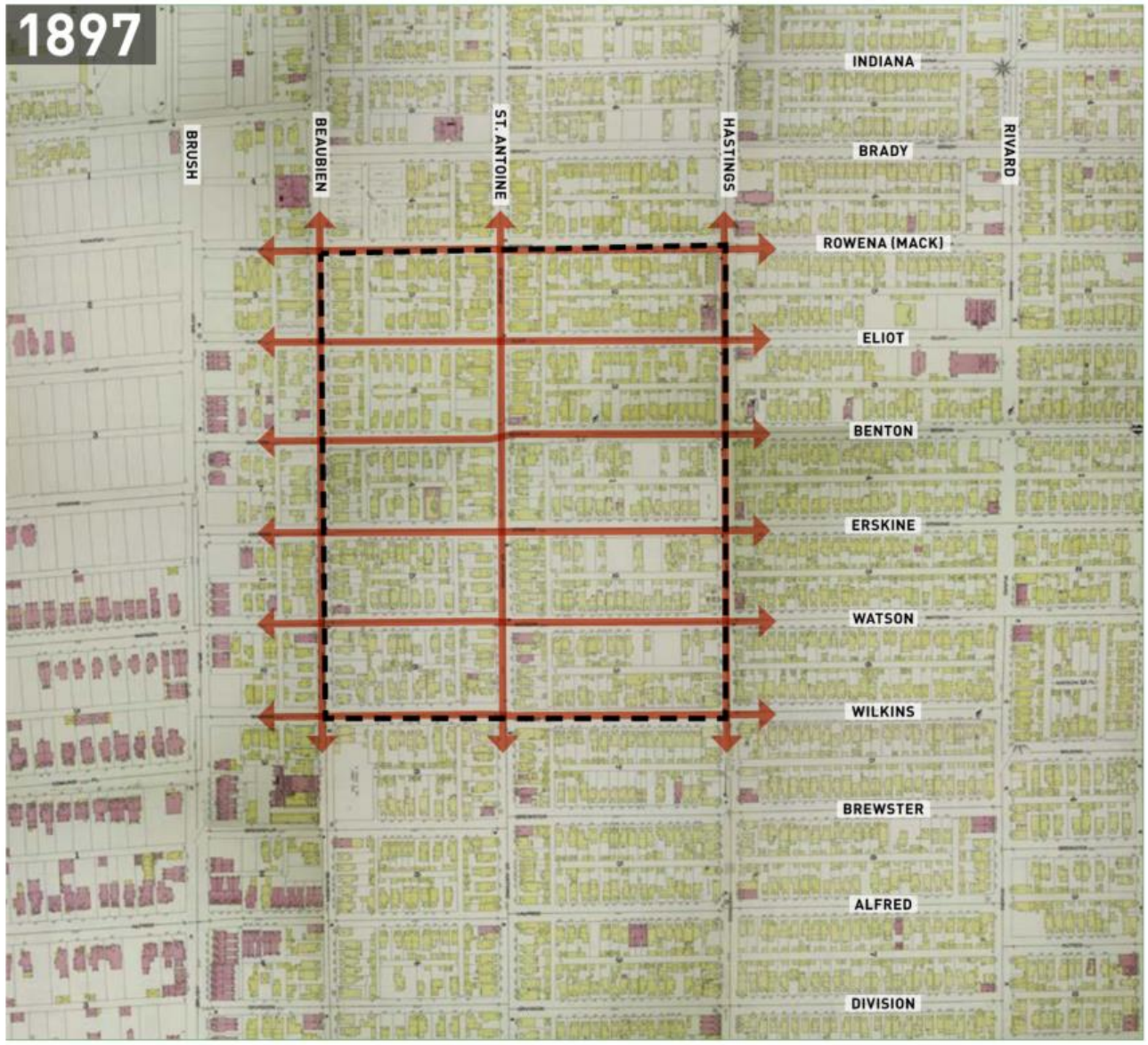
Brewster Homes is being reimagined with the goal of transforming the historic public-housing footprint into an inclusive, resilient neighborhood stitched into the fabric of Detroit's resurgence.

PLANNING CONTEXT

SITE HISTORY

Observations:

- The study area is primarily composed of residential, wood frame buildings.
- There are few non-residential uses with the exception of some office and commercial uses along Hastings (e.g., Mutual Brewing and Black Smiths).



STREETS

BREWSTER HOMES STUDY AREA

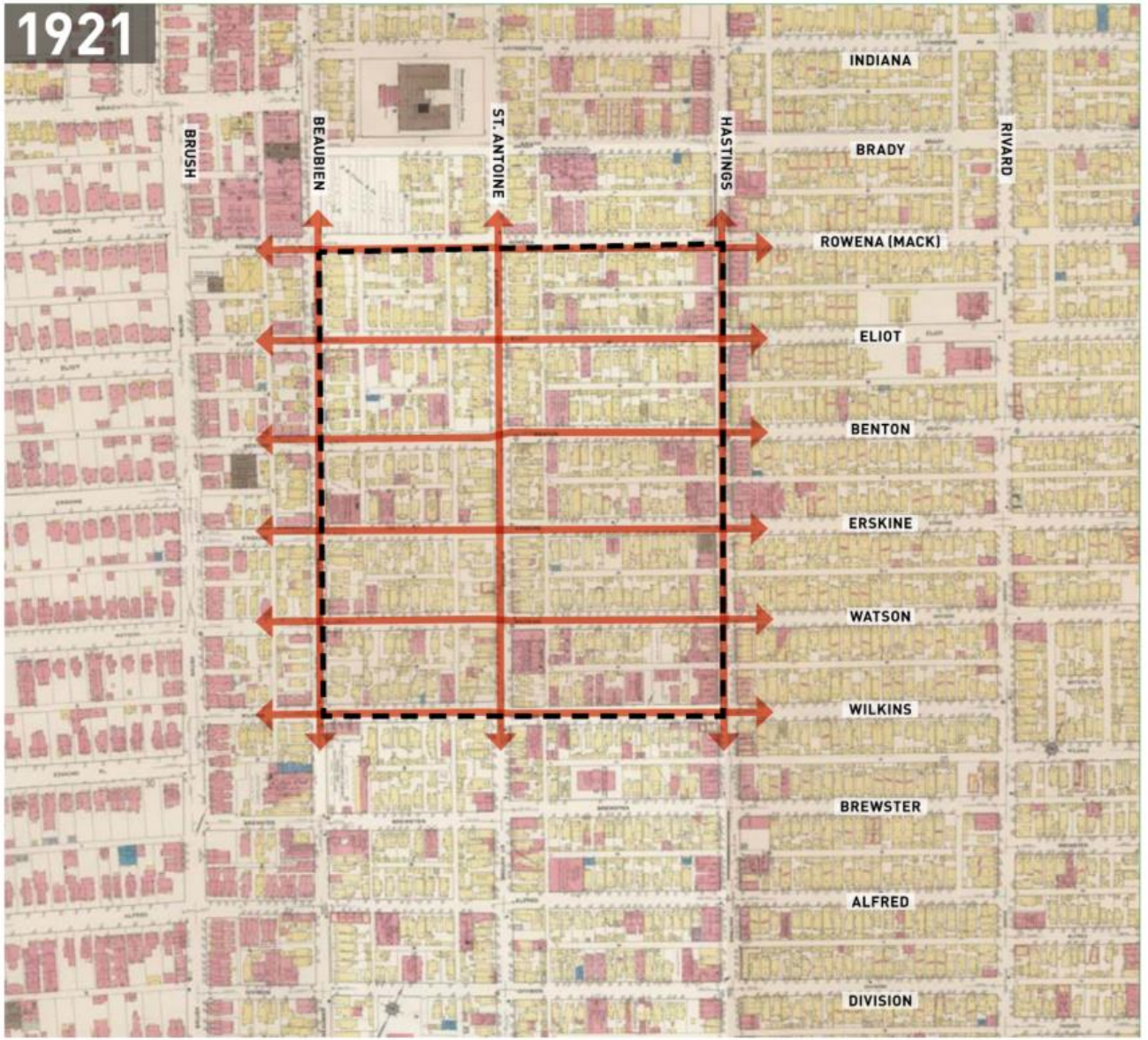
Image: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1897

PLANNING CONTEXT

SITE HISTORY

Observations:

- There is an increase in storefronts facing Hastings and commercial spaces introduced along Beaubien and St. Antoine.
- Buildings are mostly made of wood, but increasingly more large buildings are constructed with brick.



STREETS

BREWSTER HOMES STUDY AREA

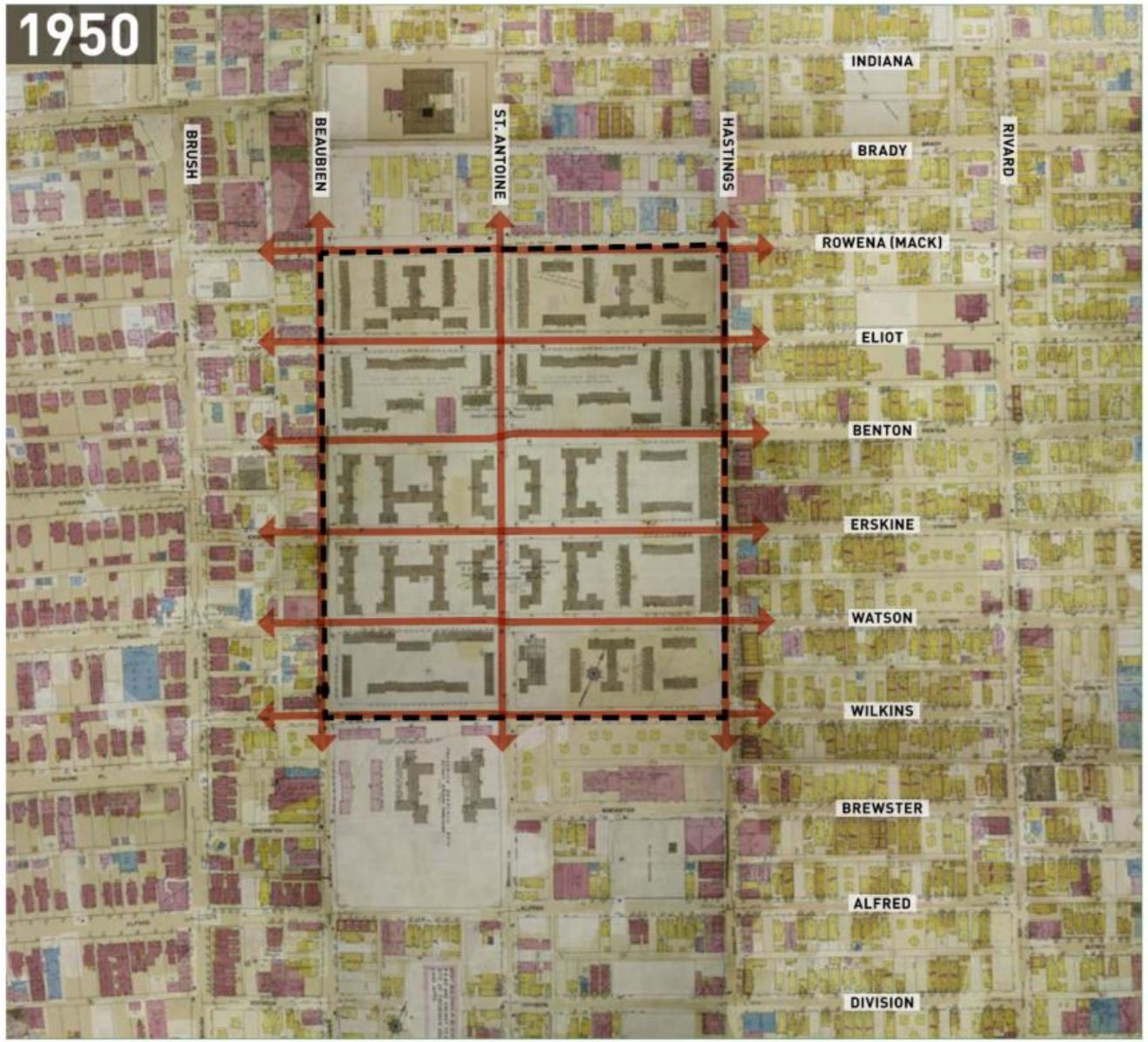
Image: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1921

PLANNING CONTEXT

SITE HISTORY

Observations:

- The entire project area, with the exception of the Greater Shiloh Baptist Church, is razed in 1935 and replaced by Brewster Homes, 59 buildings primarily composed of adobe.
- Rowena (Mack Avenue) sees a slight increase in non-residential uses.
- South of Wilkins begins to transform as part of the Frederick Douglass Apartments site — single-family homes are replaced by large apartment buildings, the Ginsberg Library, and Play Ground.



STREETS

BREWSTER HOMES STUDY AREA

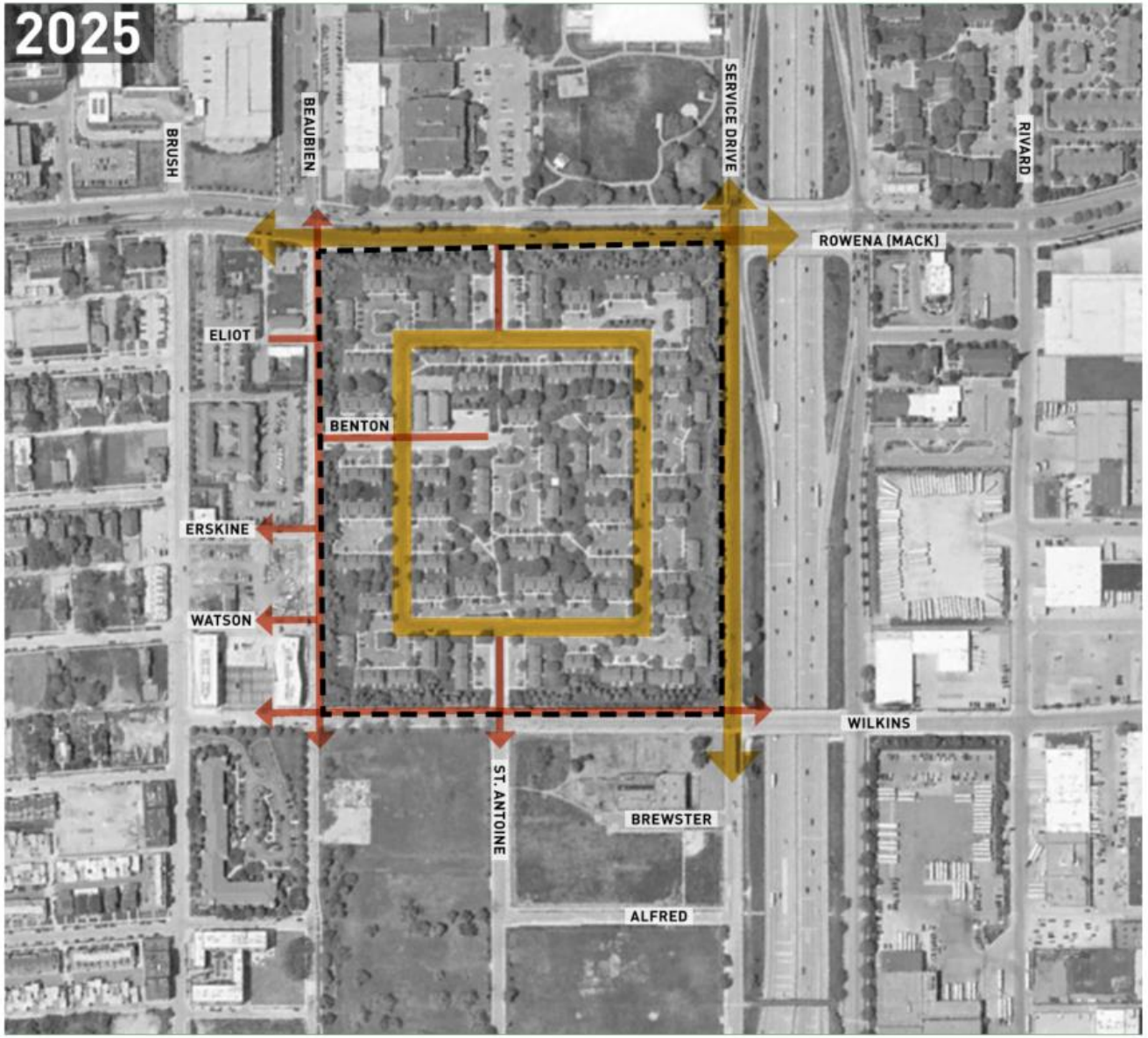
Image: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1950

PLANNING CONTEXT

SITE HISTORY

Observations:

- The original Brewster Homes has been rebuilt as 250 townhomes and a new street network.
- Hastings has been replaced by I-75 and a Service Drive at the site's eastern boundary, separating the site from Eastern Market to the east.
- Only Mack (formerly Rowena) and Wilkins remain as east-west streets that connect the site to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Mack Avenue (formerly Rowena) right-of-way has expanded and uses north of the street contain large medical buildings and Tolan Park.
- St. Antoine north of Mack/Rowena no longer exists.



NEW STREETS

HISTORIC STREETS

BREWSTER HOMES STUDY AREA

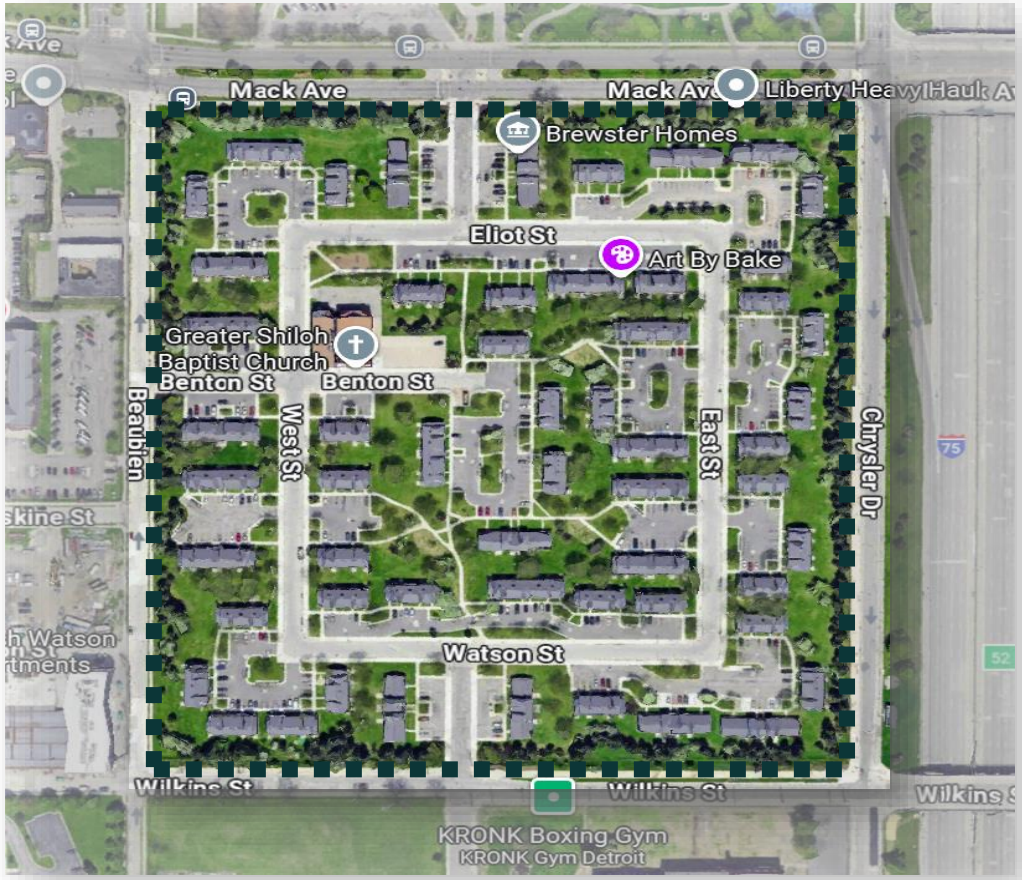
Image: Google Earth Aerial Imagery, 2025

BREWSTER HOMES – What does DHC mean by Neighborhood Context?

Greater Neighborhood Context



Localized Neighborhood Context



BREWSTER HOMES – What does DHC mean by BUILDING TYPOLOGIES?

Single Family Detached



Single Family Attached



Town House



Row House





Multi-family Apartments



Mixed Use Multi-family



Mixed Use Office



Educational Facilities

