Detroit

In Detroit, investment in the Fitzgerald neighborhood will turn vacancy into an asset as a new model for neighborhoods across the city. Vacant lots are being turned into a park and a greenway, along with a series of neighborhood hubs for community gardens and smaller recreation spaces. The commercial corridors will be reactivated with retail uses, and a storefront center for neighborhood design and planning houses staff from collaborating partners and public programming.

Signal:

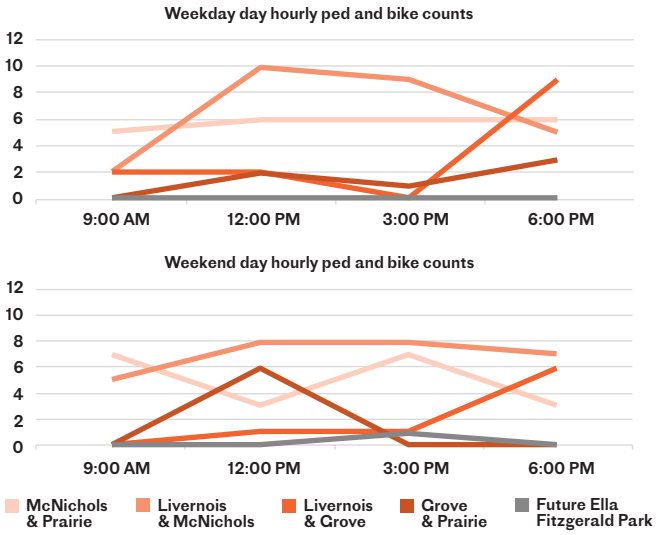
Public Life

Civic commons visitorship

Average hourly visitorship of the sites.

Source: Observation map

3
people per hour



Frequency of visits to the civic commons

Percent of respondents who say they visit the sites at least weekly.

Source: Intercept survey

N/A*

METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Length of average visit to the civic commons	Percent of site visitors who say they spend at least 30 minutes in the sites when they visit.	Intercept survey	**N/A***
Frequency of visits to public places	Percent of respondents who visit a public place such as a park, library or community center at least once a week.	Neighborhood survey	**41%**
Regular programming of the civic commons	Average number of hours of weekly programming at sites.	Internet research	**0**

*Detroit was not able to host an intercept survey due to lower visitorship of existing sites.

Signal:

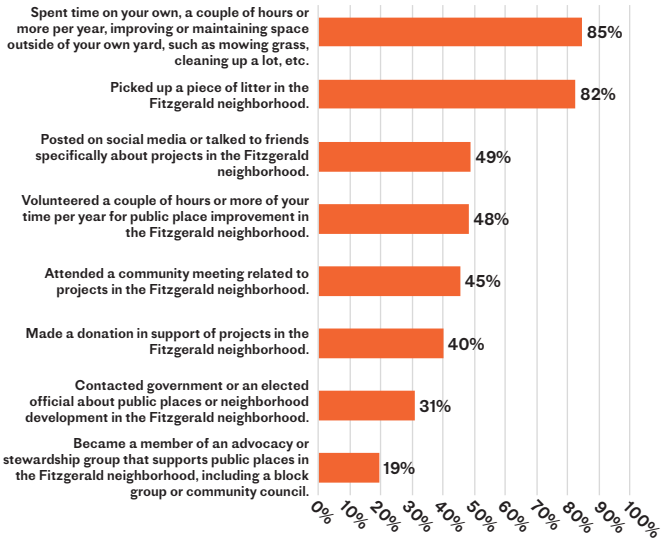
Stewardship & Advocacy

Acts of stewardship or advocacy

Percent of respondents participating in stewardship or advocacy related to the neighborhood.

91%

Source: Neighborhood survey

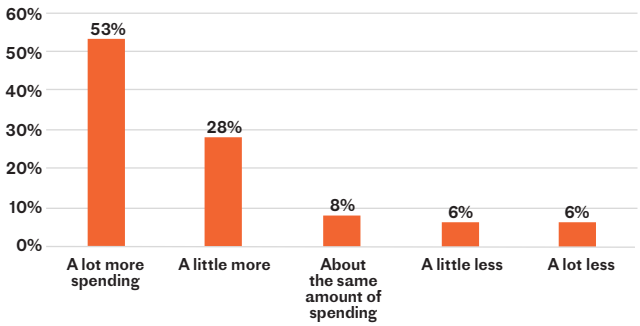


Support for public spending on the civic commons

Percent of respondents who support increased spending to fund civic assets.

81%

Source: Neighborhood survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Neighborhood voter turnout	Percent of the citizen voting age population in the neighborhood that turned out for the last local election.	County elections data; Census Bureau population estimates	**19.4%**
Importance of civic commons sites	Percent of respondents who say the sites are important to either them, their community or the city.	Intercept survey	**N/A***
Support for public policies for the civic commons	Percent of respondents who would be more likely to support a politician who advocates for policies to better support civic assets.	Neighborhood survey	**N/A**

*Detroit was not able to host an intercept survey due to lower visitorship of existing sites.

National comparison data

Median voter turnout in most recent mayoral election in 30 largest U.S. cities was 20%; Source: Who Votes for Mayor?, 2016

Signal:

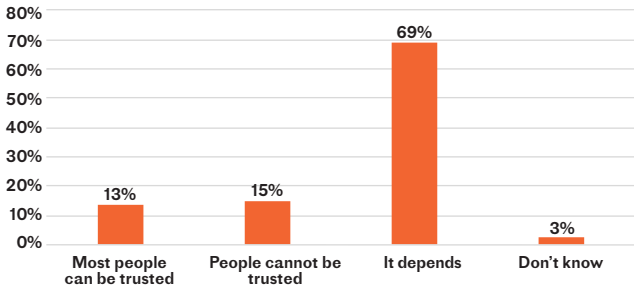
Trust

Trust in others

Percent of respondents who say that most people can be trusted.

13%

Source: Neighborhood survey

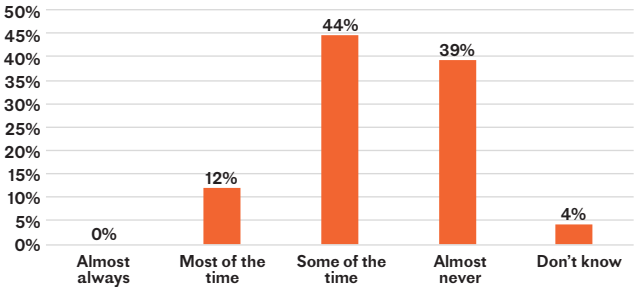


Trust in local government

Percent of respondents who think they can trust the local government in their city to do what is right almost always or most of the time.

12%

Source: Neighborhood survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Trust in local institutions	Percent of respondents who think they can trust the local government in their city to do what is right almost always or most of the time.	Neighborhood survey	**48%**
Physical markers of distrust in the neighborhood	Percent of parcels showing signs of defensive measures.	Physical survey	**16%**

National comparison data

Nationally 32% say most people can be trusted, while 64% say people cannot be trusted; Source: General Social Survey, 2016

Nationally 20% of Americans today say they can trust the government in Washington to do what is right just about always or most of the time; Source: Pew Research Center, 2017

Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Signal:

Mixing on Site

Income diversity of site visitors

Probability that any two individuals selected at random will be from the same income group. 80 is most diverse, 0 is least.

N/A*

Source: Intercept survey

Racial and ethnic diversity of site visitors

Probability that any two individuals selected at random will be from the same racial or ethnic group. 80 is most diverse, 0 is least.

N/A*

Source: Intercept survey

METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Citywide site visitorship	Percent of site visitors from the city who report living outside of the neighborhood.	Intercept survey	**N/A***
Opportunities for impromptu interactions in the civic commons	Percent of site visitors within conversational distance of one another.	Observation map	**N/A**

*Detroit was not able to host an intercept survey due to lower visitorship of existing sites.

Signal:

Reputation

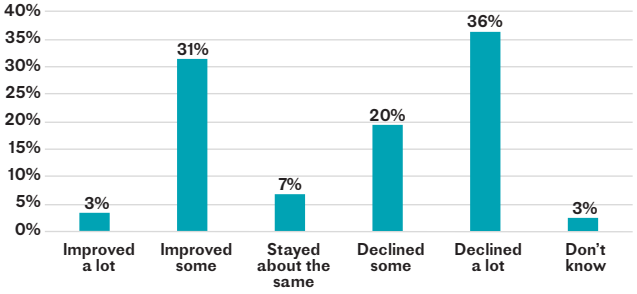
Perceptions of the neighborhood and its future

Percent of respondents who feel neighborhood has changed for the better.

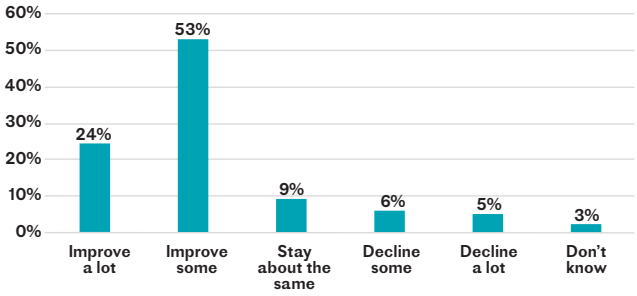
34%

Source: Neighborhood survey

Perceptions of how the neighborhood has changed over the last few years



Perceptions of how the neighborhood will change over the next few years



Public perceptions of sites and of the neighborhood

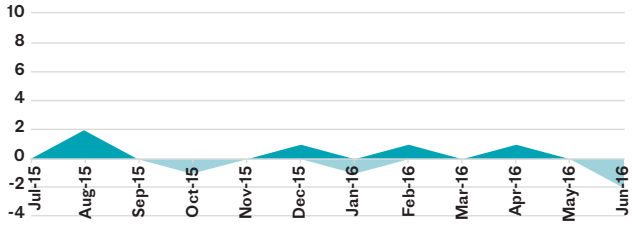
Percent of local news articles with positive narrative about the sites and the neighborhood.

56%

Baseline

Source: Monitoring of local news sources

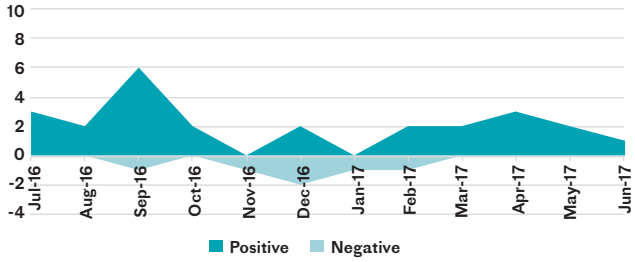
Local news sentiment analysis. 7/1/2015-6/30/2016



81%

Year 1

Local news sentiment analysis. 7/1/2016-6/30/2017



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Impact of sites on the neighborhood	Percent of respondents who say the sites have a positive impact on the neighborhood.	Neighborhood survey	McNichols Road commercial corridor **68%** Livernois Avenue commercial corridor **68%**
Awareness of sites	Percent of respondents who have visited the sites.	Neighborhood survey	**N/A**

Signal:

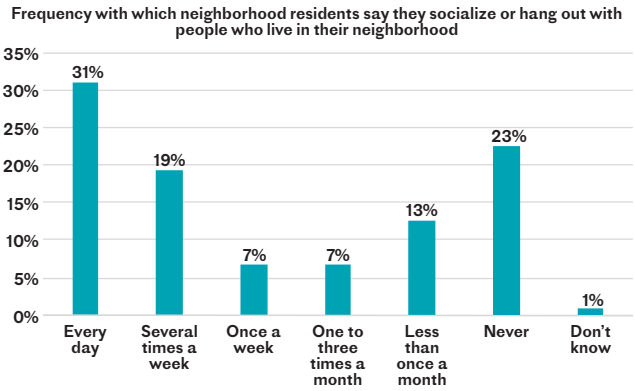
Bridging Social Capital

Time spent with neighbors

Percent of respondents who say they socialize with people who live in their neighborhood at least once a week.

57%

Source: Neighborhood survey



Opportunities for meeting new people in the civic commons

Percent of site visitors making new acquaintances in the sites.

N/A*

Source: Intercept survey

METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Diversity of neighborhood social networks	Percent of respondents with highly diverse social networks.	Neighborhood survey	**N/A**

*Detroit was not able to host an intercept survey due to lower visitorship of existing sites.

National comparison data

Nationally 20% say they spend a social evening with neighbors at least once a week, while 32% say they never do; Source: General Social Survey, 2016

Signal:

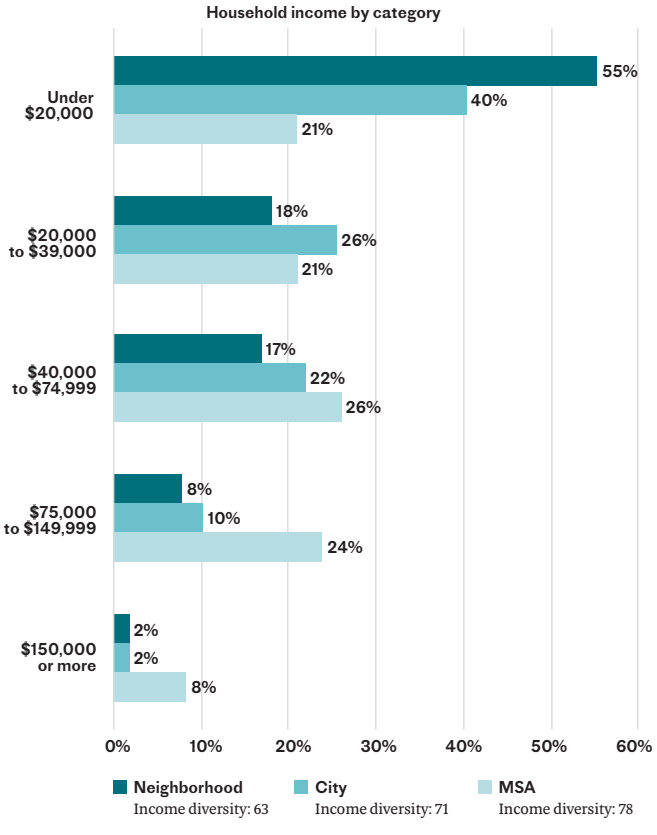
Neighborhood Diversity

Income diversity of neighborhood residents

Probability that any two individuals selected at random will be from the same income group. 80 is most diverse, 0 is least.

63

Source: American Community Survey

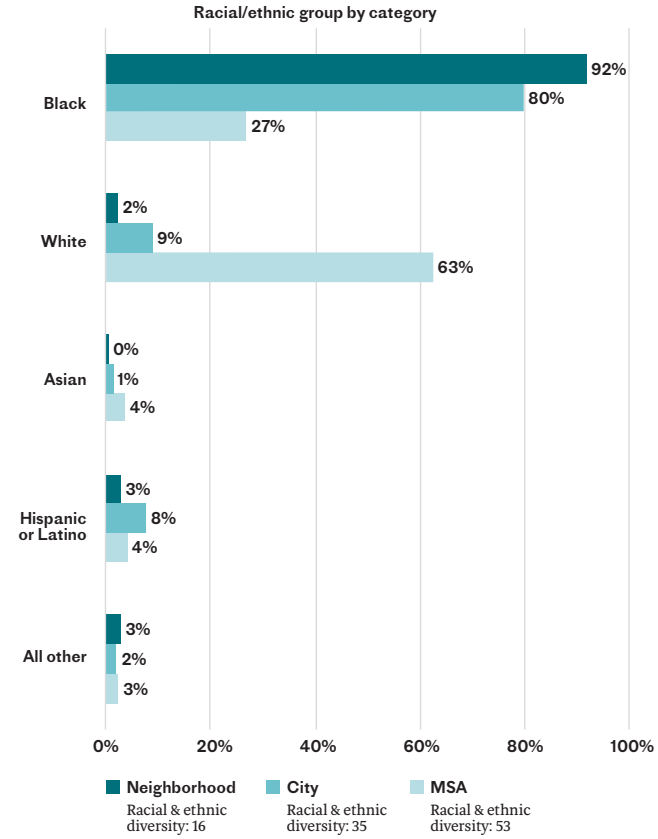


Racial and ethnic diversity of neighborhood residents

Probability that any two individuals selected at random will be from the same racial/ethnic group. 80 is most diverse, 0 is least.

16

Source: American Community Survey



Signal:

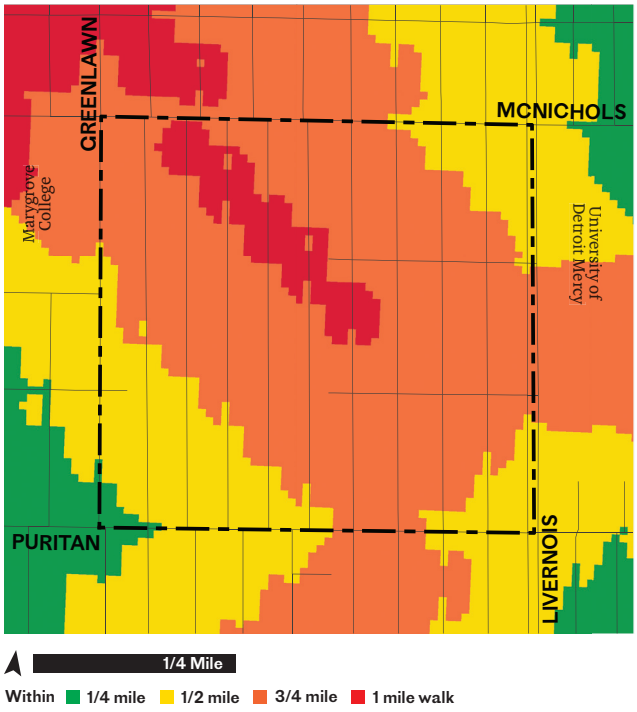
Access to Nature

Distance to park or public open space

Percent of residential parcels in the neighborhood that are within a half mile walk of a park or public open space.

24%

Source: Physical survey

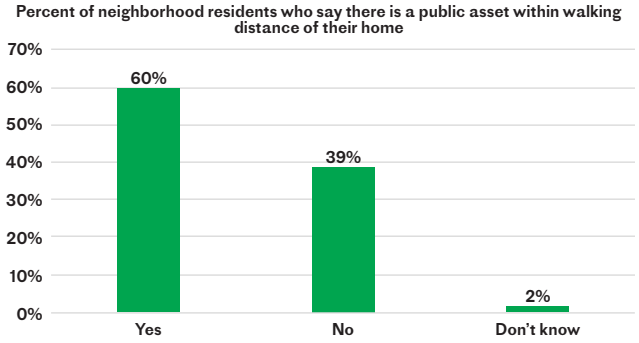


Perception of access to nature

Percent of respondents who say they live within walking distance of a park, trail, playground, or public garden.

60%

Source: Neighborhood survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
ParkScore®	Citywide analysis of an effective park system. 100 is most effective, 0 is least.	The Trust for Public Land	42.5
Citywide investment in parks	Total public spending on parks and recreation per resident.	The Trust for Public Land	$15.00

National comparison data

The national median in the baseline year for total public spending on parks and recreation per resident was $82. The maximum spending per resident was $287 in Washington, D.C.; the minimum spending per resident was $15 in Detroit, MI and Stockton, CA.

Signal:

Ecological Indicators

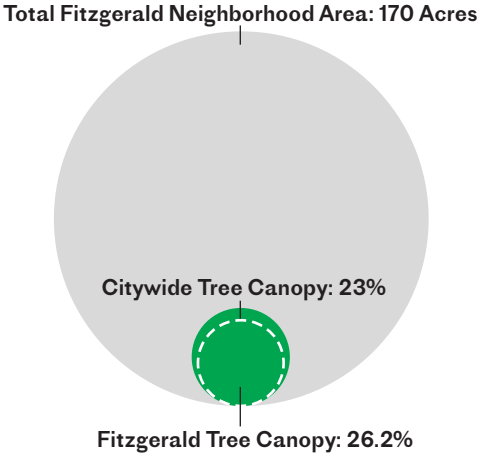
Tree canopy

Percent of neighborhood covered by tree canopy.

Source: i-Tree Canopy by the USDA Forest Service

26%

of neighborhood land area covered by tree canopy

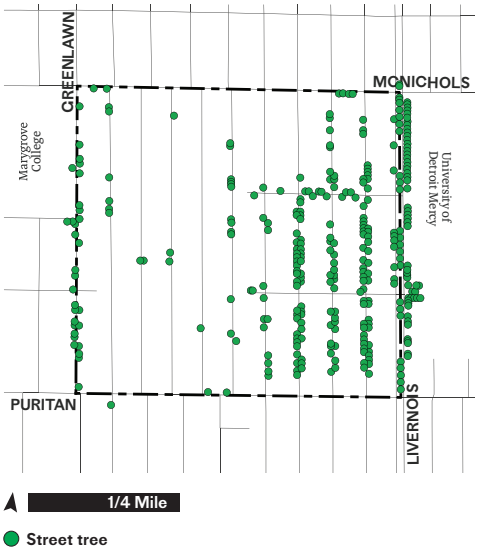


Tree count

Total number of street trees in the neighborhood site area.

323

Source: Physical survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Neighborhood carbon dioxide sequestered annually	Tons of carbon dioxide sequestered annually in trees located in the civic commons neighborhood.	i-Tree	**186.89 tons**
Site carbon dioxide sequestered annually	Tons of carbon dioxide sequestered annually in trees located in the civic commons site area.	i-Tree	**N/A**
Perception of street trees	Percent of respondents who say street trees are beneficial to the neighborhood.	Neighborhood survey	**65%**
Sustainable materials	Quantity of sustainable materials incorporated in site design.	Demonstration team tracker	**N/A**
Stormwater management	Total square footage of stormwater features on neighborhood streets and in sites including basins, native plantings and impervious surfaces.	Demonstration team tracker	**N/A**

National comparison data

Based on a review of existing street tree planting guidelines in U.S. cities, a standard recommendation of street tree spacing is 20' to 60' on center depending on the tree variety. Based on this standard, it would be expected that the neighborhood of study would have 380-1,141 street trees

Signal:

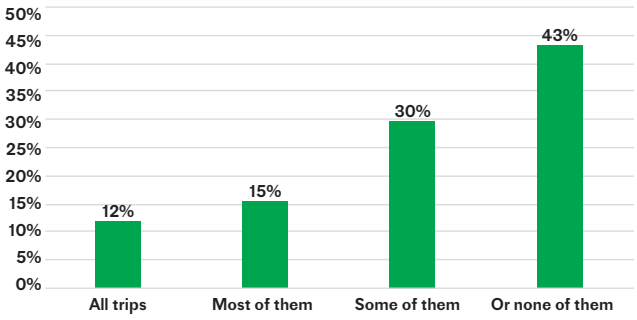
Walkability/ Bikeability

Neighborhood walking and biking behavior

Percent of respondents who say they take at least some non-work trips by foot.

57%

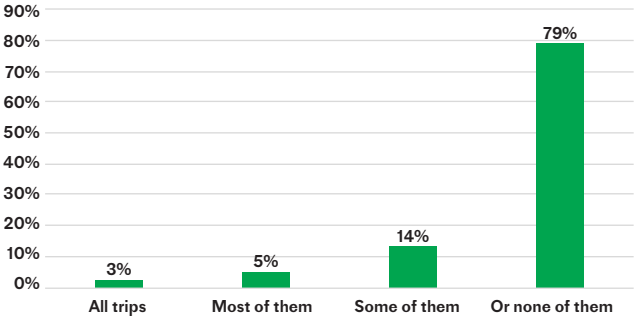
Source: Neighborhood survey



Percent of respondents who say they take at least some non-work trips by bike.

22%

Source: Neighborhood survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Walking, biking and transit access to the civic commons	Percent of respondents who say they walked, biked or took transit to the sites.	Intercept survey	**N/A***
Neighborhood walking infrastructure	Percent of neighborhood intersections that include controlled pedestrian crossings.	Physical survey	**25%**
Neighborhood biking infrastructure	Percent of neighborhood street length that includes bike lanes (dedicated or shared).	Physical survey	**0%**
Neighborhood Walk Score	Index of walkability, based on distance to common destinations including parks, schools, stores, restaurants and similar amenities. 100 is most walkable, 0 is least.	Redfin	**53**
Neighborhood Bike Score	Index of bike access, based on bike facilities and share of the population using bikes. 100 is most bike-friendly, 0 is least.	Redfin	**39**
Neighborhood Transit Score	Index of transit access, based on number of stops and frequency of transit service in the area. 100 is most transit served, 0 is least.	Redfin	**50**

*Detroit was not able to host an intercept survey due to lower visitorship of existing sites.

Signal:

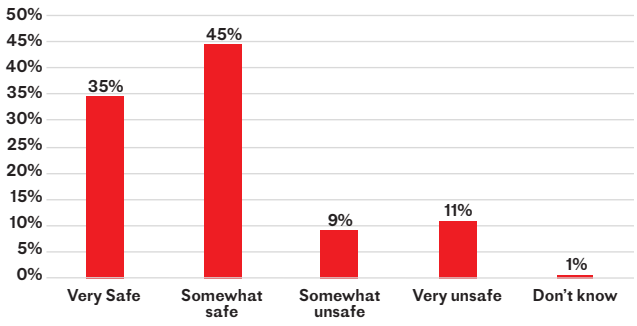
Safety

Perception of neighborhood safety

Percent of respondents who say they feel safe in the neighborhood during the day.

80%

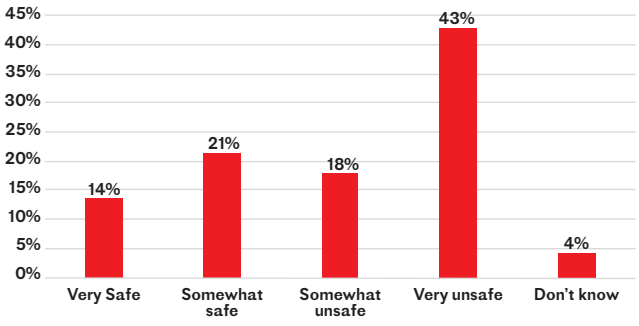
Source: Neighborhood survey



Percent of respondents who say they feel safe in the neighborhood at night.

35%

Source: Neighborhood survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Female site visitorship	Percent of site visitors who are female.	Observation map	27%
Reported neighborhood crime	Average monthly reported crime incidents in the neighborhood.	Local police department	50

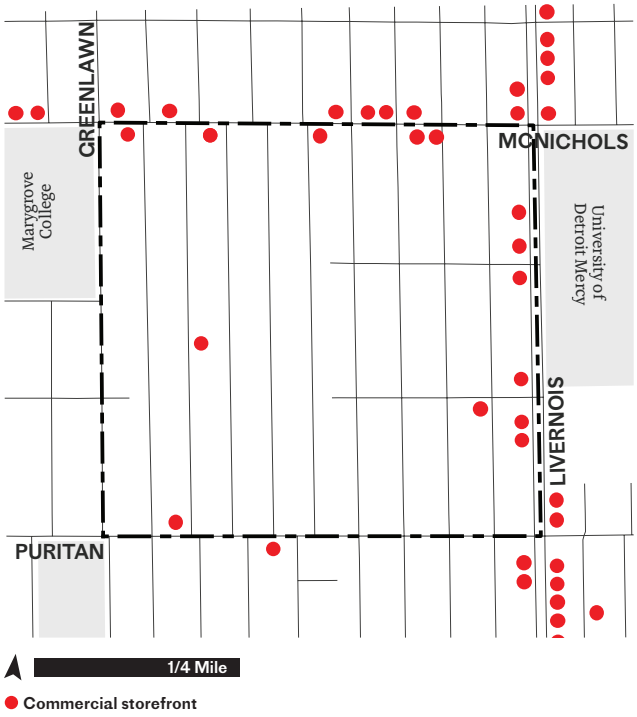
Signal:

Retail Activity

Storefronts

Number of local customer-facing retail and service businesses located in the neighborhood. **25**

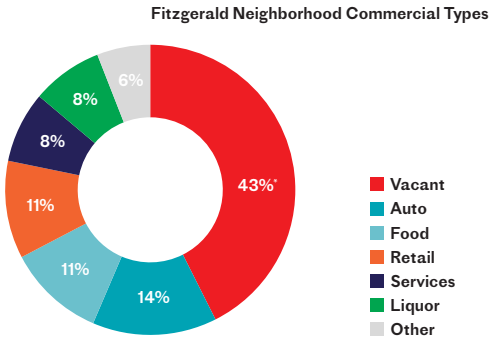
Source: Reference USA business database



Commercial property vacancy

Percent of commercial buildings in the neighborhood that appear vacant. **43%**

Source: Physical survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Independent businesses	Share of neighborhood restaurants that are not part of one of the nation's 300 largest restaurant chains.	Reference USA business database	**50%**

*Due to rounding, figures total more than 100%.

Signal:

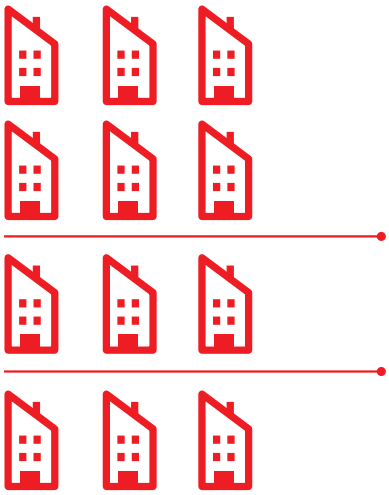
Real Estate Value & Affordability

Home values

Median and lower quartile values of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood.

$49,200
median home value

Source: American Community Survey



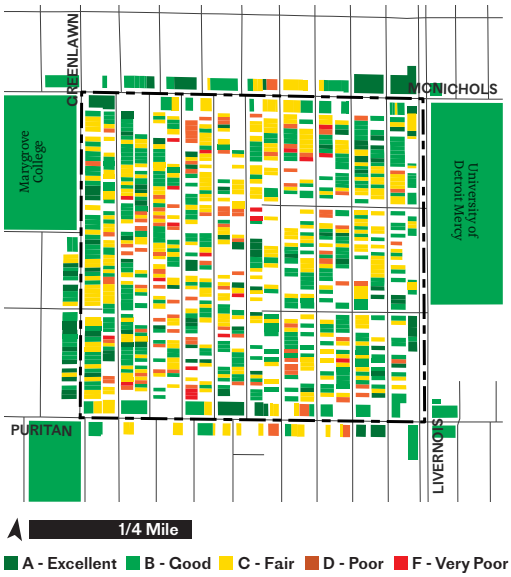
Median Home Value
$49,200

25th Percentile Home Value
$25,800

Neighborhood building conditions

Percent of buildings that appear in good or excellent condition. **52%**

Source: Physical survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Owner-occupied share	Percent of housing units in the neighborhood owned by their occupants.	American Community Survey	47%
Neighborhood rents	Median and lower quartile gross rent paid by renter households in the neighborhood.	Zillow; American Community Survey	Median $788 25th Percentile $304
Cost burdened renters	Percent of renter households spending more than 30 percent of income on rent.	American Community Survey	44%
Residential property vacancy	Percent of residential properties in the neighborhood that appear vacant.	Physical survey	23%
Underutilized land	Percent of parcel area in the neighborhood that is vacant lots or surface parking, excluding large institutional parcels.	Physical survey	27%

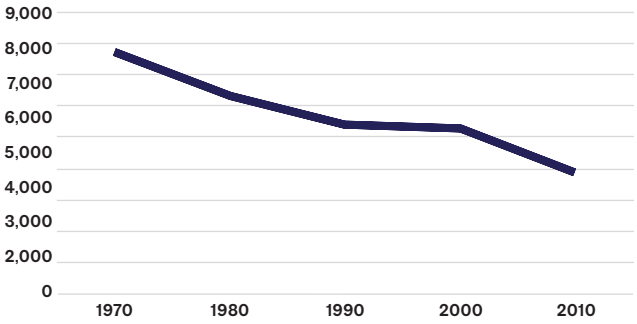
Neighborhood Economic Measures

Population

Total resident population in the neighborhood.

3,189

Source: American Community Survey

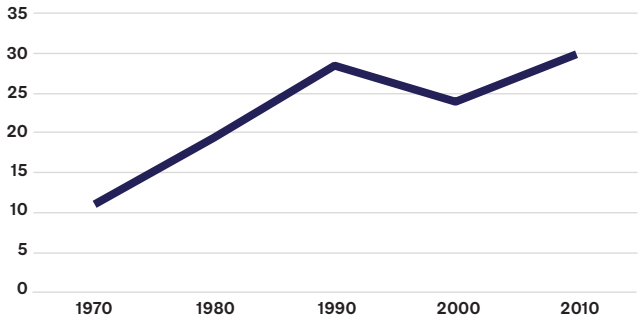


Poverty rate

Percent of households in the neighborhood living below the poverty line.

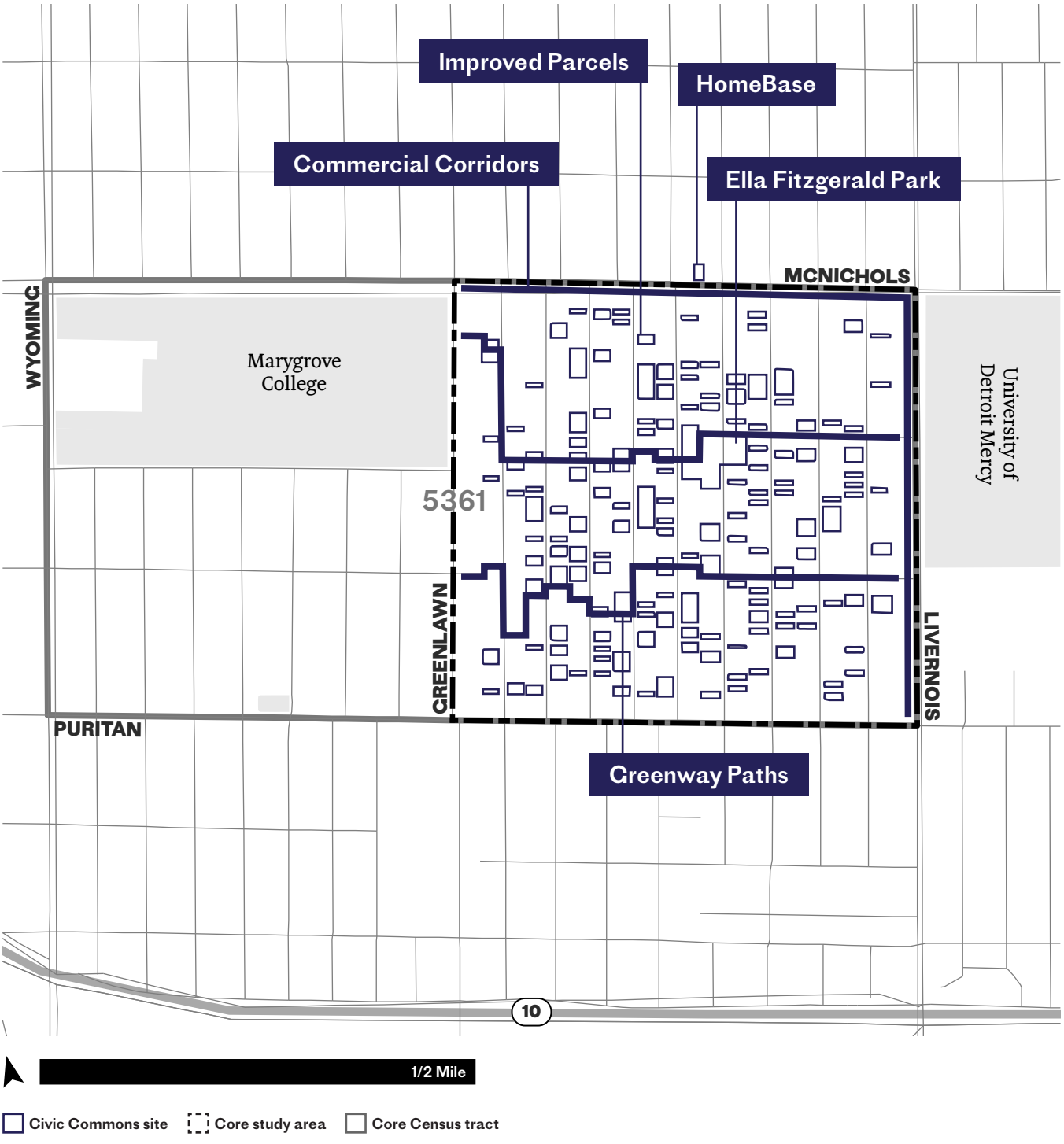
35.7%

Source: American Community Survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Median household income	Income of the typical, 50th percentile, household in the neighborhood.	American Community Survey	**$17,260**
Per capita income	Average income on a per person basis.	American Community Survey	**$14,116**
Unemployment rate	Percent of the total labor force that is unemployed and looking for work.	American Community Survey	**26.2%**
Four-year college attainment rate	Percent of neighborhood residents 25 and older who have completed at least a four-year college degree.	American Community Survey	**9%**

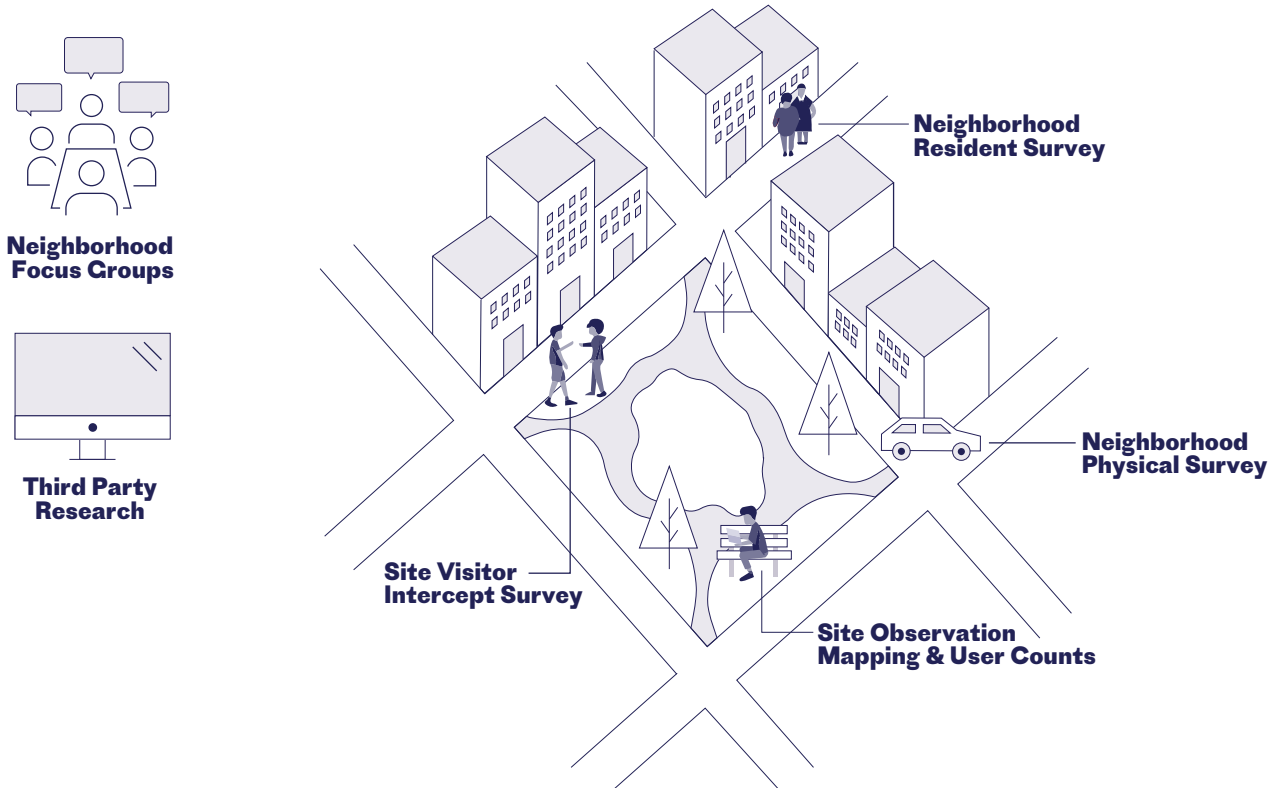
Geographic Study Area



Appendix:

Methodology

Appendix: Methodology



All data provided within this report was collected and analyzed by Reimagining the Civic Commons' learning partners City Observatory and Interface Studio, LLC.

Neighborhood Physical Survey

The physical survey of the Fitzgerald neighborhood was fielded from 11/29/2016 to 12/2/2016 and recorded conditions at 1,492 parcels. The boundary of the neighborhood used for the physical survey was bounded by McNichols Road to the north, Livernois Avenue to the east, Puritan Avenue to the south, and Greenlawn Avenue to the west. For streets that defined the boundaries of the study, parcel conditions were recorded on both sides of the street centerline. Surveyors recorded a 360° video of parcel conditions throughout the study area on 12/2/2016 in order to have a visual record of conditions at the time of the survey. Surveyors collected data on a range of topics, including: land use, building and yard condition, street trees, tree canopy, transportation infrastructure, defensive design measures, and any activity related to sale, construction, or condemnation. The survey was completed by two staff members trained to recognize applicable physical conditions from a windshield survey.

Physical markers of distrust in the neighborhood

The physical survey also cataloged obvious physical markers of distrust towards the neighborhood located on residents' and business owners' properties. This metric, and the logic behind it, was inspired by ***Robert Sampson's Seeing Disorder: Neighborhood Stigma and the Social Construction of "Broken Windows"***, in which Sampson examines the impact of visible forms of disorder on neighborhood perception. During the physical survey, staff noted the presence of the following signs of distrust, which included but were not limited to:

- "Beware of Dog" signs
- Grates on windows of residential properties
- Grates / pull-downs on commercial facades
- High or excessive fencing
- Home security system signs

Tree count

Because the entirety of Fitzgerald neighborhood is a focus of Detroit's Civic Commons project through the use of scattered site infill development, park and greenway creation, and greening on vacant lots, an inventory of street trees in the neighborhood was performed, noting location and status in the neighborhood.

Neighborhood building conditions

During the physical survey, building conditions were noted for each structure in the neighborhood based on exterior conditions visible from the street. Building conditions were rated on a scale of A (for Excellent) through F (for Failing), and included a separate for construction, based on the following criteria:

A. EXCELLENT: Good and needs no maintenance or repair; new construction and/or shows no signs of lack of maintenance or poor construction

B. GOOD: Needs minor repairs only; some signs of wear are visible and/or indicators of insufficient maintenance are present; all defects are minor and merely cosmetic.

C. FAIR: Requires a limited number of major repairs; there are highly visible cosmetic defects as well as visible indications of minor structural issues.

D. POOR: Requires comprehensive renovation; the building's defects are well beyond cosmetic and significant structural issues may be present; the building is in danger of becoming hazardous.

F. FAILING: Dilapidated and not able to be repaired or renovated; the building is structurally unsound, hazardous, and is not or should not be occupied.

X. UNDER CONSTRUCTION: Construction of building is not complete.

Neighborhood Resident Survey

The Fitzgerald Neighborhood Resident Survey was fielded from 7/11/2017 to 7/19/2017 as a door-to-door survey targeting a probability sample of neighborhood households in the area extending from McNichols Road and Greenlawn Ave in the Southwest to Puritan Ave and Livernois Ave in the Northeast. Only one adult respondent from each participating household was surveyed. 120 total respondents completed the survey; though the total number of respondents for each question may vary slightly, as respondents were excluded from the data when they chose not to answer a question, unless otherwise noted. Surveys were conducted primarily during early afternoon and evening hours on weekdays. Surveyors were instructed to approach every other single family or small multi-family residence, and they made up to three attempts to complete a survey at all targeted residences. Surveys were limited to residents over 18 years of age. Individuals were offered the option to enter a raffle for a $100 gift card as incentive to take the survey.

Bridging social capital measure

For the Fitzgerald neighborhood, the local demonstration team elected to create an alternative question to the one used in other Civic Commons cities to measure the bridging of social capital. The question in the Fitzgerald neighborhood survey, rather than focusing on the diversity of respondents' social networks related to income and profession, sought to measure if there were places in the neighborhood where respondents would expect to run into or meet 1) other Fitzgerald residents, 2) residents from other neighborhoods, and 3) faculty or students from UDM or Marygrove College. The goal of these three questions was to assess whether respondents felt there were shared spaces in the neighborhood that might facilitate mixing between these three groups.

Site Visitor Intercept Survey

Because the Civic Commons sites in the Fitzgerald neighborhood are still in the planning and design stages, a site visitor intercept survey was not applicable to administer at this stage of the study.

Site Observation Mapping & User Counts

Because the Civic Commons sites in the Fitzgerald neighborhood are still in the planning and design stages, a modified mapping exercise, in comparison to the methodology used in neighborhoods with existing sites, was employed to assess the number and general demographics of individuals occupying spaces that were either slated to become, or would likely be impacted by, planned Civic Commons sites.

User counts were conducted on one weekday and one weekend day (7/27/2017 and 7/29/2017) at the top of the hour at 9am, 12pm, 3pm, and 6pm at five locations within the Fitzgerald neighborhood study area:

A. The intersection of McNichols Road & Prairie Street

B. The intersection of McNichols Road & Livernois Avenue

C. The intersection of Livernois Avenue & Grove Street

D. The intersection of Grove Street & Prairie Street

E. The parcels that comprise the planned site of Ella Fitzgerald Park

At the top of each hour, the surveyor proceeded to perform user counts at these five locations, at each of which they counted, for five minute intervals, the number and general demographics of all individuals who crossed an imaginary line into or out of the space defined on the mapping tool. User count data in this report were tabulated using predefined demographic categories that surveyors used to tally passing users; these include: total count, gender, general age, and whether the user was on a bicycle. The final user count data presented in this report are composite counts from all four days on which data was collected.

Third Party Research

A range of third party data sources were collected and analyzed for this report including

- American Community Survey, 2011-15
- County elections data: County elections data from the Detroit election held on November 5, 2013
- Local police department: Detroit Police Department, 2016 Crime Statistics. December 2015 to November 2016.
- Redfin, 2016
- Reference USA business database, 2015
- The Trust for Public Land, 2016
- Zillow, 2016

Regular programming of the civic commons

Because the Civic Commons sites in the Fitzgerald neighborhood are still in the planning and design stages, an analysis of the average hours of weekly programming per site was not applicable to administer at this stage of the study.

Public perceptions of sites and of the neighborhood

For the Fitzgerald neighborhood and Civic Commons sites, mentions in general circulation papers, identified by Brink Communications, were tracked and identified by whether the article expressed an overall positive or negative sentiment. To track appropriate mentions, a list of keywords was developed relating to each neighborhood and site. A series of Google Alerts were then created for each news publication to catalog local news mentions. Article sentiments were tallied on a monthly basis. The number of positive mentions was divided by the total inventory to produce the average percentage of local news articles with positive narratives about the sites and neighborhoods.

Sentiments are analyzed on a yearly basis, starting on July 1, 2015 and concluding on June 30 of the following year. The news publications tracked in Detroit are the Daily Detroit, Detroit Free Press, and The Detroit News via their respective websites.

Income diversity of neighborhood residents

This income diversity index is computed as follows: Census data from 2011-15 American Community Survey on household income is used to divide the population into five income groups. We compute the share of the population in each census tract that is in each of these groups. The index is computed as 1 minus the sum of the squared shares of the five groups, and corresponds to the probability that any two randomly selected persons in the neighborhood would be from different groups.

Racial and ethnic diversity of neighborhood residents

This racial and ethnic diversity index is computed as follows: Census data from the 2011-15 American Community Survey is used that reports the number of persons in each of five racial ethnic groups (white, black, latino, asian, and all other). We compute the share of the population in each census tract that is in each of these groups. The index is computed as 1 minus the sum of the squared shares of the five groups, and corresponds to the probability that any two randomly selected persons in the neighborhood would be from different groups.

Tree canopy

The USDA Forest Service's i-Tree Canopy tool[1] was used to estimate tree cover for the Fitzgerald neighborhood. The i-Tree tool uses a random sampling process of publicly available imagery from Google Maps to classify land use types and calculate environmental and economic benefits from the percentage of tree canopy found in a given area. For the Fitzgerald neighborhood, a total of 600 points were sampled with an overall Standard Error of less than 2% for all land cover types. Citywide tree canopy estimates were drawn from third party sources.

1. "The concept and prototype of this program were developed by David J. Nowak, Jeffrey T. Walton and Eric J. Greenfield (USDA Forest Service). The current version of this program was developed and adapted to i-Tree by David Ellingsworth, Mike Binkley, and Scott Maco (The Davey Tree Expert Company)." From: i-Tree Canopy Technical Notes. Accessed on 1/3/2018 at: https://canopy.itreetools.org/resources/iTree_Canopy_Methodology.pdf

Neighborhood Focus Groups

Four focus groups comprised of residents, nearby neighbors, students, and small business owners were held during the week of 11/28/2016 to 12/2/2016 in the Fitzgerald neighborhood. In total, 42 community members participated in the focus groups. The goal of the focus groups was to gain a qualitative understanding of neighborhood conditions and Civic Commons sites (if pre-existing) from different populations that occupy it.

Local demonstration teams were asked to recruit 10-12 participants over the age of 18 for each focus group. Census data for the Fitzgerald neighborhood was used to provide demographic recruitment targets with regards to age, race, and gender to ensure that participants were reasonably representative of the neighborhood population. For University students, local demonstration teams were asked to recruit a mix of age, gender, and racial backgrounds that generally reflected the study body from a variety of departments.

Focus groups were facilitated by 2 staff members for approximately an hour and a half without other members of the Civic Commons team or other local partners present. Participants were provided with a brief introduction to the Civic Commons project and the purpose of the focus group before discussion started. At the outset of some focus groups, local partners provided a brief introduction before departing.

Quotations from the focus groups presented in this report are edited for clarity.