



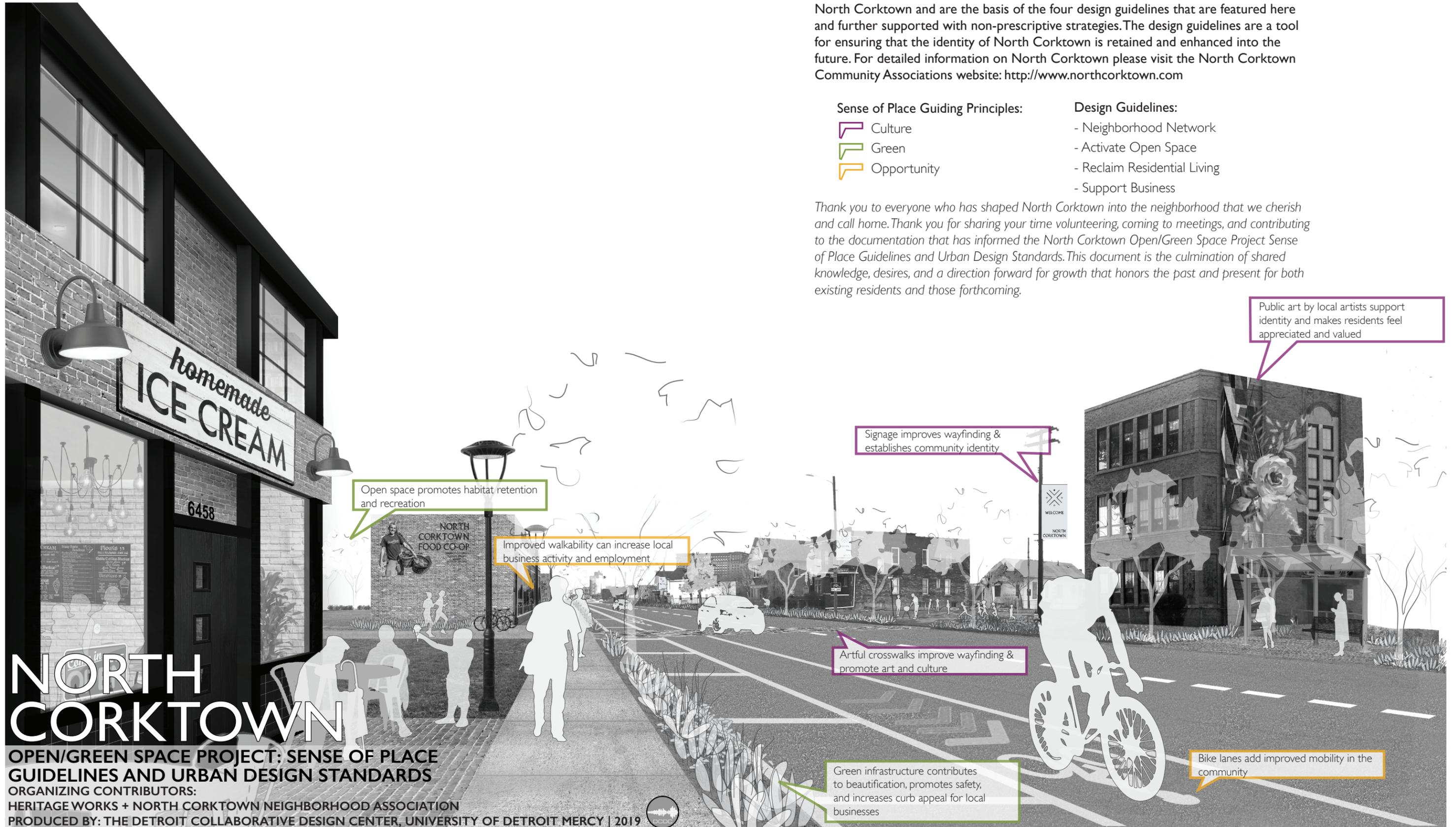
NORTH CORKTOWN

OPEN/GREEN SPACE PROJECT: SENSE OF PLACE
GUIDELINES AND URBAN DESIGN STANDARDS

ORGANIZING CONTRIBUTORS:

HERITAGE WORKS + NORTH CORKTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

PRODUCED BY THE DETROIT COLLABORATIVE DESIGN CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY | 2019



The North Corktown open/green space sense of place guidelines are informed by three guiding principles - Culture, Green, and Opportunity that capture the essence of North Corktown and are the basis of the four design guidelines that are featured here and further supported with non-prescriptive strategies. The design guidelines are a tool for ensuring that the identity of North Corktown is retained and enhanced into the future. For detailed information on North Corktown please visit the North Corktown Community Associations website: <http://www.northcorktown.com>

Sense of Place Guiding Principles:

-  Culture
-  Green
-  Opportunity

Design Guidelines:

- Neighborhood Network
- Activate Open Space
- Reclaim Residential Living
- Support Business

Thank you to everyone who has shaped North Corktown into the neighborhood that we cherish and call home. Thank you for sharing your time volunteering, coming to meetings, and contributing to the documentation that has informed the North Corktown Open/Green Space Project Sense of Place Guidelines and Urban Design Standards. This document is the culmination of shared knowledge, desires, and a direction forward for growth that honors the past and present for both existing residents and those forthcoming.

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INTRO

These Sense of Place Design Guidelines for North Corktown provide a framework for spatial and aesthetic considerations inherent to the community. They have been formed through a community engagement process led by Mission Lift, documentation from community meetings since 2016, and previous plans identified within this document. In particular, the design guidelines call attention to design considerations that impact the built environment of North Corktown by focusing on the inclusion of culture, green/ open space, and the abundant opportunities in the neighborhood. The guidelines provide recommendations for connections through the neighborhood, use of open space, and residential and business opportunities. These recommendations are supported with strategies to promote an equitable thriving community.

By design these guidelines are not prescriptive, but rather descriptive, making recommendations for design decision-making but not dictating what the neighborhood should look like. Recommendations included here are intentionally flexible and thus able to be modified to fit the specific circumstances and adapt overtime. They are a reflection of values and priorities representative of the existing community. Furthermore, these design guidelines do not seek to represent or duplicate technical requirements for land-use, zoning, building code, or any other legally binding requirement.

Process:

North Corktown Neighborhood is excited about the change coming to the neighborhood. In anticipation, the community has authored many documents that have heavily informed these sense of place design guidelines. The following documents have been analyzed as they are collectively the voice of the community through various engagements. These have been synthesized to extract the three guiding principles, and the four design guidelines, and related strategies. The design guidelines are illustrated using photographs from the neighborhood along with diagrams and annotations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A special note of appreciation to The Kresge Foundation for the award of the KIP:D grant for supporting the work of Heritage Works along with the North Corktown Neighborhood Association and the City of Detroit. Additional gratitude the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation, Michigan Council for the Arts and Culture Affairs, National Endowment for the Arts, and the Erb Family Foundation.

SOURCES

Sustainable Development Task-Force Plan North Corktown Neighborhood Association	2018
North Corktown Charrette: Open Spaces and Defining Edges City of Detroit	2018
North Corktown Movement Building Feasibility Study Heritage Works	2018
Ford North Corktown Investment and Michigan Central Station Renovation Community Benefits Report City of Detroit Planning and Development Department	2018
North Corktown RFP Draft Submission for City of Detroit Planning and Development Department North Corktown Neighborhood Association / North Corktown Sustainability Committee / Freedom House (Jeff Klein, Rhonda Greene, Bethany Betzler, Wai Ming Lau, Tricia Talley, Ryan Anderson)	2017
North Corktown Neighborhood, Neighborhood Development & the New Beginnings Garden Project: A Formative Evaluation Assessment Heritage Works	2016
North Corktown Neighborhood Association Sustainable Development Task-Force Plan North Corktown Neighborhood Association	2016

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Culture

Located just northwest of downtown Detroit and roughly one half-square-mile in area, North Corktown (NoCo) is our oasis in the D. Dubbed “country living in an urban prairie” by a local blogger due to its farms, high concentration of open spaces, and residents’ lifestyles, NoCo is shaped by growers, solitude seekers, creative individuals, and long time residents that aren’t afraid of hard work and share a commitment to nature, community, and community involvement. I embrace our reputation as upstarts -- residents that gradually improved our community’s quality of life through the “cumulative impact of small resident-driven projects.”

Before the construction of I-75, North Corktown and Historic Corktown seamlessly formed Corktown, Detroit’s oldest extant neighborhood. The interstate divided our community into two distinct parts geographically. Still one in spirit, we celebrate being part of the greater Corktown community yet also celebrate ourselves as a cultural crossroads with Mexicantown to the southwest, “hipster” midtown to the east, historic Corktown to our south, and a university district to the north. From Nancy Whiskey to our labor halls to our day house, farms and faith-based institutions, the diversity of our residents and institutions represents the best of the city of which we are proud to be a part.

Green

North Corktown is uniquely situated in close proximity to downtown with an asset of open space. Green or open space is one of the defining characters of the neighborhood that as an urban community is like no other. North Corktown has generous access to nature, a network of green infrastructure that serves the community, creates social places, provides ecological services for wildlife, pollinators and water systems, and contributes to the physical and mental health of our residents.

These design guidelines enhance the vitality of the existing assets and use of the current green space that support livelihoods (Brother Nature), connect with neighbors (Hope Takes Root), and explore artistic expression and entrepreneurship (Pink Flamingo). Similarly open spaces provide recreational opportunities for children to play (Cochrane Street) and for bird watching, specifically pheasants (Temple and 13th St). These landuses also lend themselves to ecological purposes such as managing stormwater with rain gardens, increasing trees, specifically fruit trees, for public use, all of which enhance the overall beauty of the neighborhood.

Opportunity

The potential of North Corktown encompasses land use, economic growth, amenities, and quality of life all building upon the existing identity and strengths of the community. As North Corktown experiences increased development, the design guidelines can support both existing and forthcoming residents in making decisions about how to retain the asset of green/open space for social, cultural, ecological, and economic production. The design guideline strategies provide insights to the multifaceted approach to creating an enriched community with homes, retail, recreation, economic growth and sustainable practices anchored in the cultural identity of the community and celebrating the asset of open space.

DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

USING THE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

Each of the design guidelines and strategies embody the three Guiding Principles: Culture, Green, and Opportunity. Illustrations of the design guidelines include call-out boxes with specific examples of how strategies may be implemented, color coded to indicate which of the guiding principles are being supported. The design guidelines illustrate non-prescriptive ideas that are not site specific, rather are a means of communicating ideas to be implemented by the community.

NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

- N1 CREATE A TAPESTRY OF NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS
- N2 DELINEATE SPACES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY
- N3 CREATE CLEAR CONNECTIONS THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND WITH ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

ACTIVATE OPEN SPACE

- A1 PRESERVE THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE AS AN AMENITY FOR ALL INHABITANTS: INSECTS, BIRDS, SMALL ANIMALS, AND HUMANS
- A2 LEVERAGE THE ASSETS OF OPEN SPACE FOR PRODUCTIVE PURPOSES
- A3 INTEGRATE RECREATION WITH NATURAL LANDSCAPES AND EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE
- A4 CENTER ACTIVITY AROUND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
- A5 PROVIDE SPACE FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGES AND GATHERING

RECLAIM RESIDENTIAL LIVING

- R1 BLEND ECONOMIC LEVELS OF HOUSING TO PROVIDE AN EQUITABLE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR ALL RESIDENTS
- R2 PROVIDE A MIX OF HOUSING TYPOLOGIES WITH AN EMPHASIS ON INCREASING DENSITY
- R3 DESIGN FOR ALL PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY
- R4 DESIGN HOMES TO BE AS SUSTAINABLE AS POSSIBLE

SUPPORT BUSINESS

- S1 MAKE A PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY CORRIDOR
- S2 PUT INFRASTRUCTURE TO WORK
- S3 MAKE THE STREETS FOR ALL USERS AND MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

Currently characterized by ample open space, North Corktown is rich with assets of urban agriculture and natural landscapes that support wildlife. Protecting these assets is critical to retaining the identity of the neighborhood amidst growth. Retaining that identity through a network of open space will provide amenities for the community for recreation, productive landscapes, and defining the neighborhood.

N1: CREATE A TAPESTRY OF NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

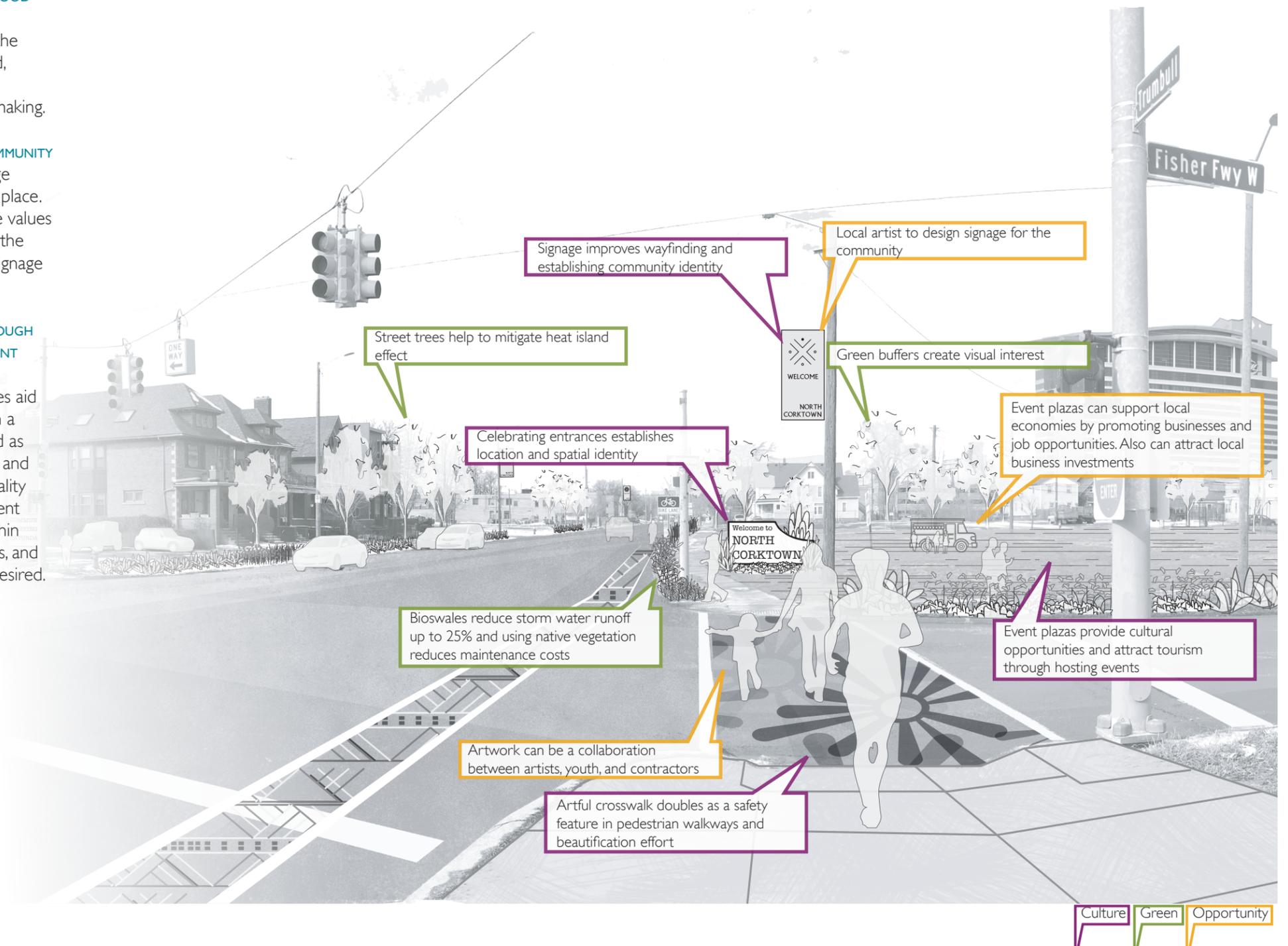
With ample open space as one of the greatest assets of the neighborhood, celebrating the diversity of uses can contribute to its identity and placemaking.

N2: DELINEATE SPACES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Acknowledging boundaries and edge conditions contribute to a sense of place. These treatments should reflect the values of the community and be a part of the identity. This can be achieved with signage and wayfinding.

N3: CREATE CLEAR CONNECTIONS THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND WITH ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

Physical connections between spaces aid in the relationship people have with a place. Being navigable and perceived as safe increases people's use of paths and routes and enhances the overall quality of the neighborhood. The engagement demonstrated that connections within North Corktown, surrounding areas, and amenities within the City were all desired.



ACTIVATE OPEN SPACE

North Corktown is comprised of residential and desired open space that is supportive of natural habitats, productive landscapes, and recreation. Balancing and supporting each of these land uses amidst growth is important for retaining the identity and values that contribute to the overall quality of the neighborhood.

A1: PRESERVE THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE AS AN AMENITY FOR ALL INHABITANTS: INSECTS, BIRDS, SMALL ANIMALS, AND HUMANS

The natural landscape of southeast Michigan is vital to many migratory birds and pollinators, contributes to stormwater management with deep roots naturally returning and filtering water to the ground, and support beautification. Considerations should be given to the scale of areas retained for natural habitats as well as how people engage with the space for recreation and education.

A2: LEVERAGE THE ASSETS OF OPEN SPACE FOR PRODUCTIVE PURPOSES

Providing both economic opportunity for people locally and contributing to solve city wide stormwater management, open space supports the community to be more sustainable and contributes to the exchange of cultural values.

A3: INTEGRATE RECREATION WITH NATURAL LANDSCAPES AND EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

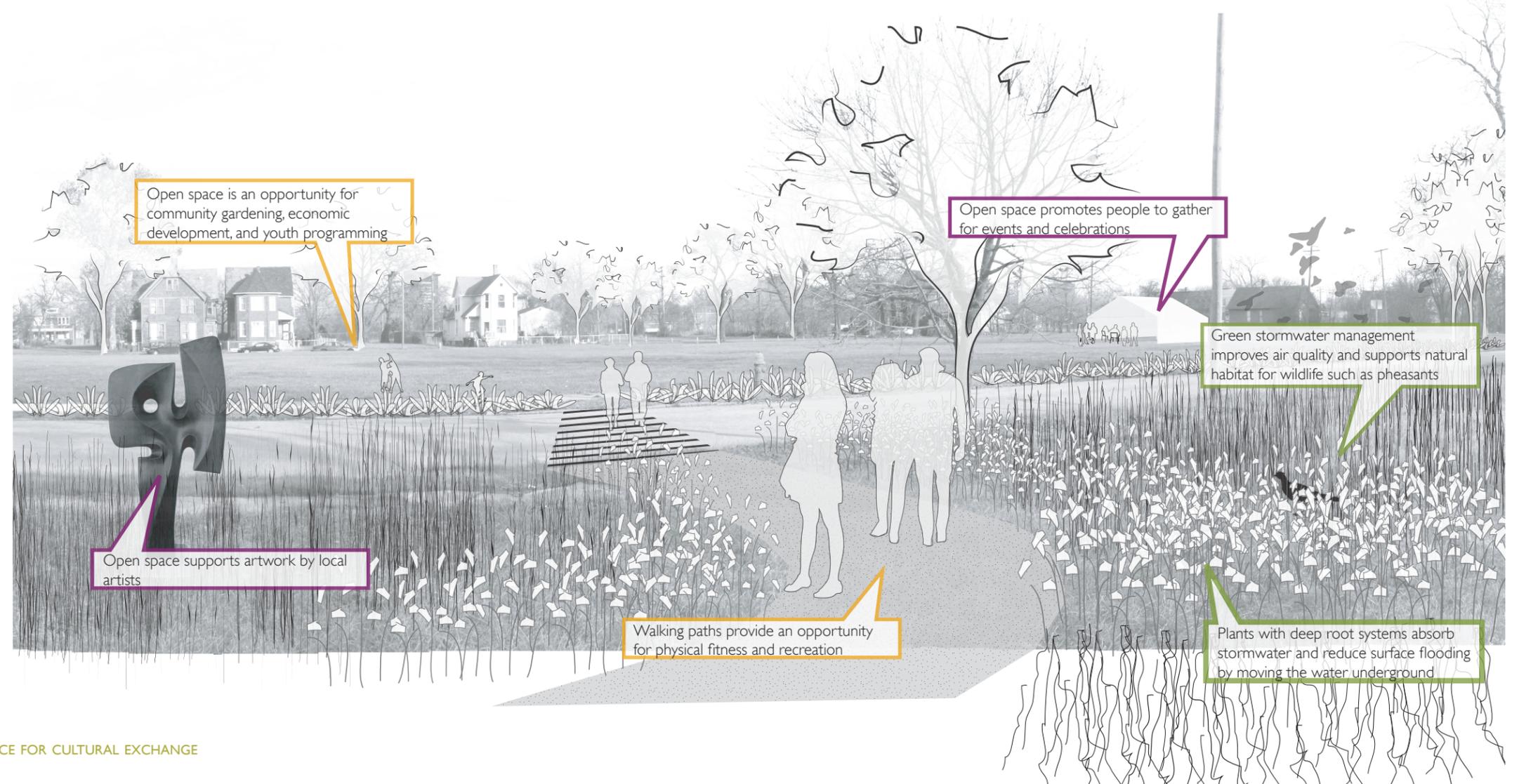
Build upon the multi-functional capacities of how land and connections are used through the neighborhood. This increases demand, economic support, and value of investment.

A4: CENTER ACTIVITY AROUND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Creating nodes of activity within the community contributes to the sense of place, pride, and celebration of culture. These spaces can be of multiple scales ranging from a bus stop to an open field and everything in between.

A5: PROVIDE SPACE FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND GATHERING

Provide spaces that are conducive for people to share cultural identities through dance, music, and theater. This includes spaces for people to participate, observe, and perform. Food, conversation, and art are vehicles for cross generational and cultural engagements that enrich the neighborhood and the experiences of people living there. Playing games and participating in sports are platforms for learning about other cultures.



RECLAIM URBAN RESIDENTIAL LIVING

Originally a part of one of Detroit's oldest neighborhoods before being separated with the construction of the freeway, the neighborhood once consisted primarily of both single and small multi-family homes. The desire to retain residential land use is a critical component to the neighborhood composition. But this is not enough; the future of the residential fabric in North Corktown should specifically celebrate and ensure that the neighborhood is inclusive of all people and incomes. Thoughtfulness about materiality, sustainable performance, and adjacencies can contribute to residential properties being attainable for everyone in the community.

R1: BLEND ECONOMIC LEVELS OF HOUSING TO PROVIDE AN EQUITABLE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR ALL RESIDENTS

Organizing housing of mixed incomes next to each other removes concerns of concentrated areas of either elevated incomes or reduced incomes. This strategy ensures that everyone can live in the neighborhood and has access to amenities such as transportation, food, shopping, and recreation.

R2: PROVIDE A MIX OF HOUSING TYPOLOGIES WITH AN EMPHASIS ON INCREASING DENSITY

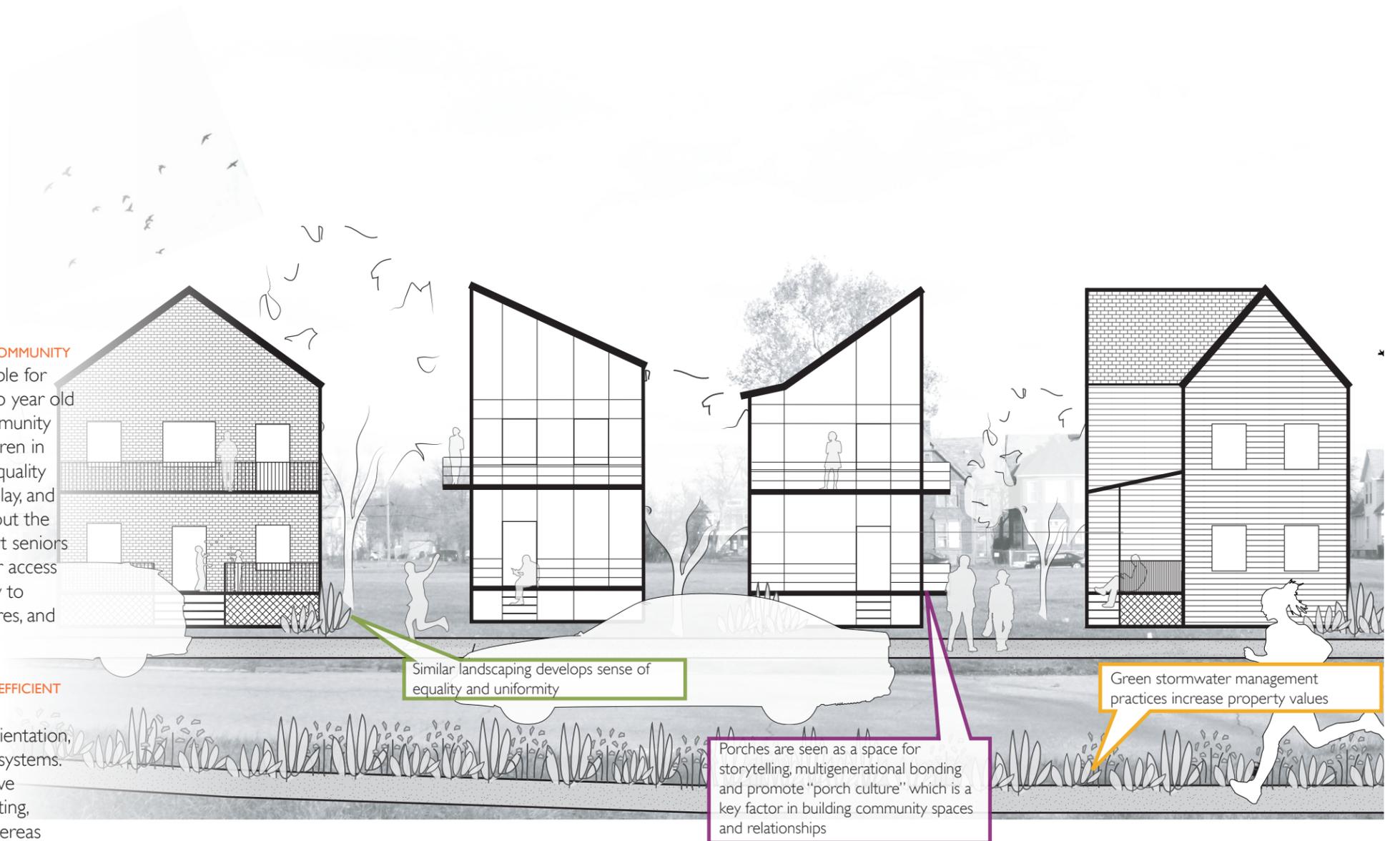
A variety of housing types - single family, duplex, multi-family supports options for residents at different economic capacities. By focusing on density, other land-uses can be incorporated, namely the retention of open space and development of commercial corridor.

R3: DESIGN FOR ALL PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Emphasizing how spaces are suitable for the two year-old to the ninety-two year old ensures that everyone in the community is cared for. Ways to support children in the community include providing quality early learning facilities, places for play, and safe routes for youth to move about the community. Being intentional about seniors aging in place includes planning for access to public transportation, proximity to quality and affordable grocery stores, and spaces for social connectivity.

R4: DESIGN HOMES TO BE AS ENERGY EFFICIENT AS POSSIBLE

Building efficiencies include site orientation, materiality, and passive and active systems. Site orientation can increase passive sustainability strategies like daylighting, ventilation, and natural cooling whereas active systems include energy production such as solar. Material choices also impact energy efficiencies and life cycle costs of buildings. For example, increasing insulation and quality of windows contributes to reduced costs of heating and cooling and sustainable materials that have longer lifespans reduce maintenance costs. All of these elements contributes the quality of the community and reflect community-identifiers.



SUPPORT BUSINESS

Part of what makes a strong vibrant community is access to amenities such as grocery stores, pharmacies, banks, a barber shop, restaurants, coffee shops, and social spaces. As North Corktown evolves, these spaces are able to be considered. The physical environment impacts business success and public spaces that surround businesses can support and foster viability based upon how the environment feels to people. Qualities of supportive environments include being navigable, clean, and demonstrating a sense of safety through lighting, occupancy, human scaled spaces.

S1: MAKE A PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY CORRIDOR

Prioritizing pedestrians within commercial corridors encourages people to frequent them as places they enjoy being. The presence of people in return supports businesses through generated foot traffic.

S2: PUT INFRASTRUCTURE TO WORK

Incorporate multiple functions into necessary streetscape improvements. Using the streetscape to improve physical environmental issues and enhancing the pedestrian experience are ways in which the streetscape can contribute to the viability of the neighborhood, specifically commercial corridors.

S3: MAKE THE STREETS FOR ALL USERS AND MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Understanding that people move about on foot, in strollers, on two, three, and four wheels, with non-motorized transportation and automobiles is critical to the composition of the street. Each of these modes of transportation have different speeds and spatial requirements. Places to lock up strollers and bikes are as important as a parking space for an automobile. Spatial separation is also important for people's sense of safety and can be managed through designated areas for each user and made more comfortable by reducing speeds of travel.

