



DRAFT

MAYOR NEELEY AND ST. JOHN STREET HISTORICAL COMMITTEE'S

ST. JOHN STREET NEIGHBORHOOD MEMORIAL PLAN

Flint, MI

**DRAFT
2/25/2022**





Dear St. John Street Historical Committee and Residents of Flint,

I am proud to announce that the City of Flint is proposing to make a foundational contribution of \$250,000 toward the development of the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial in north Flint. This investment commemorates an important part of Flint's history, creates a new legacy that uplifts historically disenfranchised residents, and reinvests in north Flint with social equity and sustainability as guiding principles.

The St. John Street neighborhood holds a special place in Flint's history, as one of Flint's most racially diverse and thriving neighborhoods, which was painfully torn down to make way for racist "urban renewal" projects. In 2020, shortly after becoming your mayor, I initiated a resolution passed by Flint City Council to declare racism a public health crisis. The City's work to dismantle racism and affirm that Black Lives Matter goes far beyond creating a zero-tolerance policy for police brutality and racial discrimination, making policy and ordinance updates, and holding Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation conversations within the Police Department and our Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. Transparency and accountability are cornerstones of my administration, and we are going beyond simply acknowledging the wrongs of the past, including the City's role in advancing harmful urban renewal legacy practices in Flint. We must reinvest in neighborhoods and communities that were stripped of generational wealth and power due to racist systems and policies, in order to strengthen the health and well-being of our residents for generations to come.

In August of last year, the City of Flint sold the former St. John Street Community Center parcel. Half of the revenue from this sale is being reinvested directly into the St. John Street neighborhood to implement the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial that blossomed from my partnership with the St. John Street Historical Committee. Working together, we will ensure your neighborhood is remembered, your resiliency is honored, and north Flint is strengthened.

Together, we are building the tomorrow we deserve today.

For the love of our community,

*Sheldon A. Neeley
Mayor of the City of Flint*



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Visionaries

The St. John Street Historical Committee is an association of residents (affectionately known as “St. John Streeters”) who lived in the St. John Street neighborhood, and come together to keep families from the neighborhood connected and history of the neighborhood documented and remembered. Established in the 1970s, the Historical Committee meets monthly, organizes annual reunions, keeps families connected throughout the year via social media, and creates historically inspired initiatives including developing the annual St. John Street neighborhood calendar. The group’s desire to commemorate the neighborhood - its place, people, and vibrancy - inspired and spurred the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial Plan.

Special thanks are given to the Administrative Team of the St. John Street Historical Committee, who played an active role in organizing the community visioning event for the memorial: President James Wardlow, Secretary Brenda Waits, Historian Fredricka Gist, Treasurer Arthur Bivins, and Archivists Brenda Fluker, Lara Nkume, and Robert Milton. City of Flint Planning & Development staff dedicated to the project include: Choice Neighborhood Planner Mona Munroe-Younis, Neighborhood Planning Initiative Planner Dequan Allen, and Parks Coordinator Roy Lash, as well as AmeriCorps Member Josh Goldbaum.

Local Partners

This plan for the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial was made possible by partners including the St. John Street Historical Committee, City of Flint Mayor’s Office and Department of Planning & Development, participating residents who lived in the St. John Street neighborhood (“St. John Streeters”) and their family members, and supporting community partners including Sloan Museum.

The memorial planning, community engagement, and memorial plan writing process was collaboratively led by the St. John Street Historical Committee and the City of Flint Choice Neighborhoods Initiative within the Planning & Zoning Division. Thank you to all who shared memories of life in St. John Neighborhood, dedicated hours and energy to planning meetings, and creatively synthesized ideas for the memorial into a unified vision that honors the legacy of the St. John Street neighborhood.



GEORGE O’DELL, LARA NKUME, COLLISTEEN EVANS, EUNICE MILTON, ROBERT MILTON, BRENDA FLUKER,
ARTHER BIVINS, REV. LETHA (DECEASED), ARCH BIBBS (DECEASED)
SEATED: BRENDA WAITS, CAROLYN WILLIAMS, JAMES WARDLOW, EVA HAMILTON
NOT PICTURED: THELMA BROWN, FRED BASHIR, CORINE STURGHILL, LONNIE WAITS, LARRY WATKINS JR., ROBERT WILLIAMS, MARY MCGEE, SYLVESTINE HOUSTON

Community Visioning Charrette Participants

Special thanks to all of the participants in the November 6, 2021 community visioning charrette:

St. John Street Neighborhood participants: Theresa Allen, Glen Allmon, Ezra Artis, Yvonne Barfield, Louise Bell, Al Berry II, J. Billingsley, Arthur Bivins, Hilda Craig, Brenda Edwards, Johnnie Ewing, Brenda Fluker, Fredricka Gist, Harold Hill, Adriane Harris, Sylvestine Houston, Margie Jones, David M. Martin, Shabaka Martin, Wilbert Martin, Mary McGee, Leon Miller, Charlotte Murphy, Almeda Nicholson, Eric Nunley, Beverly Palmer, Cordaysia Palmer, Robert (Bob) A. Raws, Hubert Roberts, Eddie Robinson, Butch “The Hat Man” Rushing, Diallo Sekou, Jerome Threlkeld, Tonedia Threlkeld, Brenda Waits, Lonnie Waits, James Wardlow, Larry Watkins, Charles Winfrey, Loretta Wright, Robert Wright Jr.

Media organization participants: iMichigan Productions Executive Producer Rodney Brown, Phil Wise

City of Flint participants: City of Flint neighborhood planner Mona Munroe-Younis and City of Flint AmeriCorps Member Josh Goldbaum

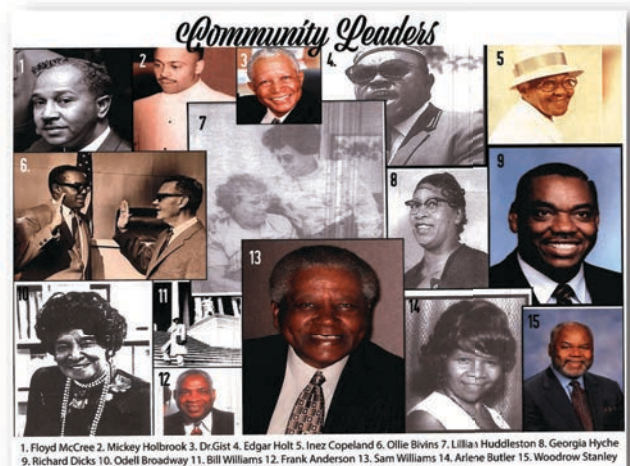
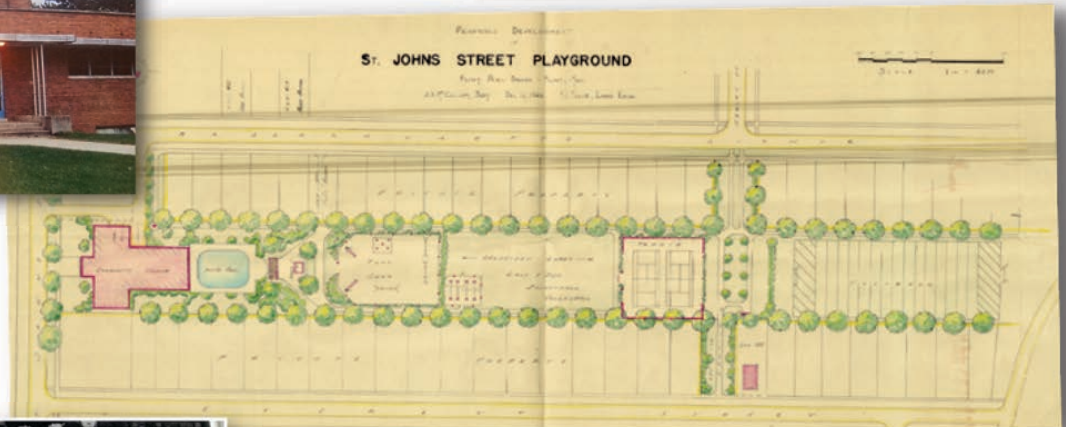
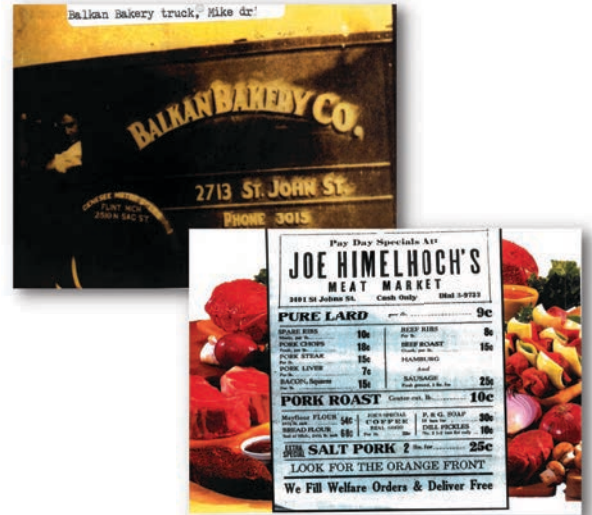
Sponsors

The community visioning event for planning the memorial was jointly sponsored by the City of Flint Department of Planning & Development (i.e. staffing, printing) and the local environmental justice organization Environmental Transformation Movement of Flint (i.e. space rental, supplies for interactive community visioning activities, refreshments, and personal protective equipment for health safety).

By the early 1900s, St. John was one of Flint's two racially integrated neighborhoods without restrictive covenants that prevented people of color from buying and living in the homes. Residents who lived in St. John fondly remember the neighborhood as a "melting pot" of immigrant and Black communities where residents coexisted across racial and economic lines.

Residents remember with pride the vibrancy of the neighborhood – leaders and elders, schools, businesses (movie theater, markets, bakeries, night clubs, etc.), places of worship, W. Boulevard Park and the beloved St. John Street Community Center.

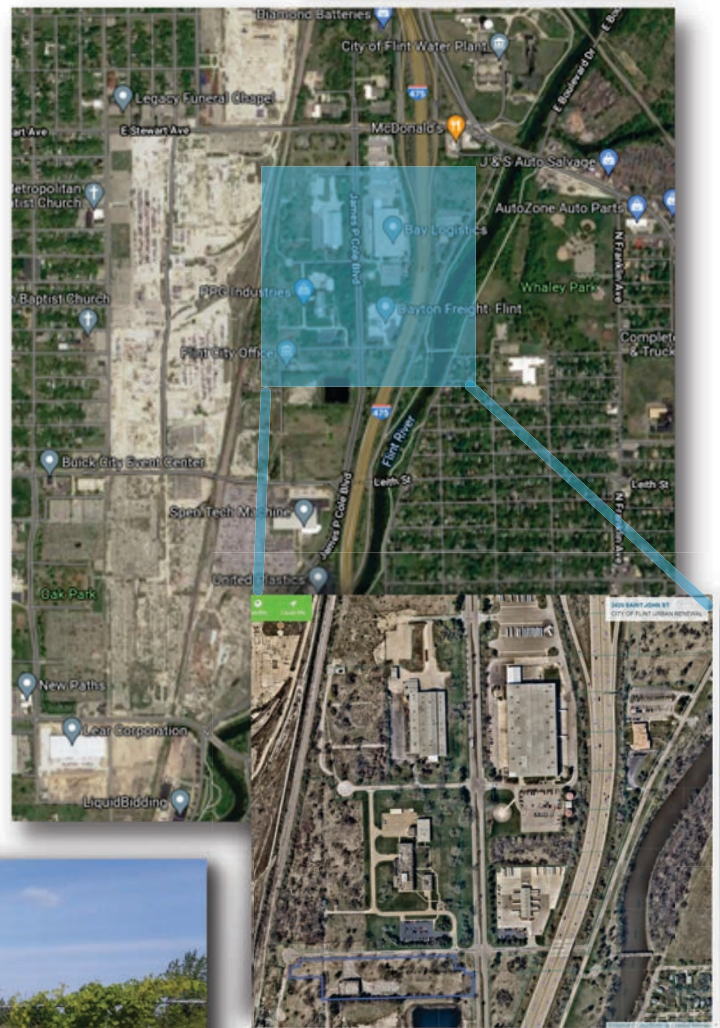
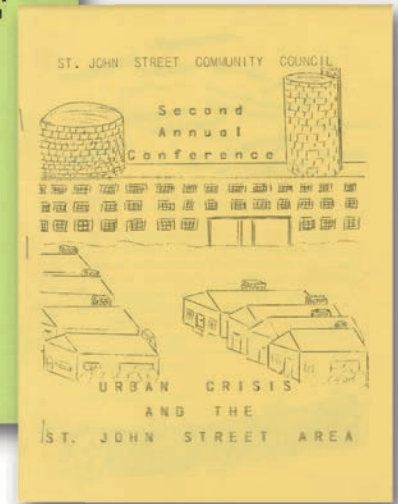
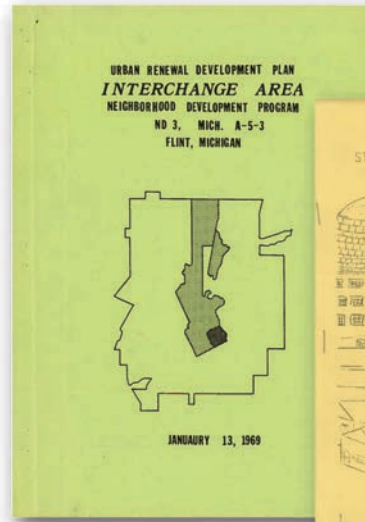
Civic life revolved around the St. John Street Community Center, a community center at the corner of St. John Street and Massachusetts Avenue (3420 Saint John Street). The building and attached St. John Park/Playground covering 4.4 acres were commissioned by the City of Flint Recreation & Park Board in the 1940s and 1950s.



Within decades, racist “urban renewal” policies swept across the United States, and Flint was no exception. The St. John Street neighborhood was one of several predominantly Black neighborhoods that were targeted. In 1975, the City of Flint repurposed the St. John Street Community Center for the Flint Police Training Academy, eliminating the only community center in the neighborhood.

The City of Flint Department of Community Development commissioned and implemented urban renewal plans to demolish thousands of homes and commercial buildings to make way for I-475 and the St. John Industrial Park. All families in the neighborhood were displaced, and the tight-knit community was literally wiped off the map.

The St. John Citizens for Improvement Association fought for equitable fair market appraisals of properties in the St. John Street neighborhood. Still, many displaced families were forced into poverty as their accumulated generational wealth vanished from depressed buy-out costs for their land. As families relocated to other areas of Flint, Genesee County or beyond, the St. John Historical Committee (“Historical Committee”) sprang to life to preserve relationships from and history of the neighborhood.





In 2021, the City of Flint sold the last remaining original building, the St. John Street Community Center, to a commercial buyer. The St. John Street Historical Committee had previously been working to gain state recognition for the building as a historic site, and decades of staff turnover at the City of Flint resulted in a loss of institutional knowledge about the site's historical importance. The St. John Community Center building was only known by current City staff as the former home of the Police Academy, which stopped being used for that purpose in 1978. The current sale was a lightning rod for former St. John residents to come together, and educate the City and community about the neighborhood's history. While the sale was another painful reminder of urban renewal days, the group chose to set its sight on a larger opportunity. When the sale was completed, the St. John Street Historical Committee shifted its energy from pursuing state registration of the Community Center as a historic building with a historical marker plaque, to a larger memorial, evolving into a concept for a memorial park and other memorial features.

The following plan describes the process, outcomes and design recommendations of the St. John Street Historical Committee, generated with staff support from the City of Flint Department of Planning & Development, Division of Planning & Zoning, for the community vision of the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial.

The Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Connection

What is TRHT?

Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) is a community-based process to plan for and bring about transformational and sustainable change, and to address the historic and contemporary effects of racism.

TRHT seeks to unearth and jettison the deeply held, and often, unconscious beliefs created by racism – the main one being the belief in a “hierarchy of human value.” The TRHT framework has five areas. The first two, Narrative Change and Racial Healing and Relationship Building, are the focus areas for the Community Foundation of Greater Flint (CFGF). The remaining three areas are Separation, the Law, and Economy.

(Source: <https://www.cfgf.org/Our-Work-Impact/Current-Initiatives/Truth-Racial-Healing-and-Transformation>)

“We are talking about changing through love, and that starts by building trust with one another. It begins with telling individual stories and listening. Healing conversations is the start of loving one another. Then a whole lot of change can come from that starting point.”

– Isaiah Oliver, CFGF President and CEO

The TRHT approach to building relationships and dismantling racism by telling the truth, amplifying authentic community voices, and taking action to right the wrongs of the past served as a foundation for the collaboration between the St. John Street Historical Committee and the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) through the City of Flint Planning Division. The HUD-funded Choice Neighborhoods Program actively works to undo the effects of urban renewal by creating high-quality mixed-income housing in Flint and working with neighborhood groups to uplift the neighborhoods gaining the new housing, by implementing community-identified transformational neighborhood improvements. Similarly, the collaboration for the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial seeks to face the painful harm caused by urban renewal, create a new neighborhood amenity for generations of residents to enjoy in north Flint, build on the assets of the St. John neighborhood (people + place) and share St. John Street neighborhood stories/history so that it does not disappear from public knowledge.

Through the Choice/TRHT work, a partnership formed between the City of Flint, Community Foundation of Greater Flint, Sloan Museum, University of Michigan-Flint, and equity/sustainability/social impact expert Salin Geevarghese with his consulting firm SGG Insight to organize the "Healing Through Truth Telling" events series, addressing a number of topics related to equitable community development, Flint history and community empowerment. Members of the St. John Street Historical Committee formed a panel of speakers to share stories of St. John Street neighborhood history, from their own lived experiences, for the "Owning Our Truth, Embracing Our Change" event as part of this series, hosted by Sloan Museum on August 25, 2021. The recording of the event can be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/OwningOurTruth>

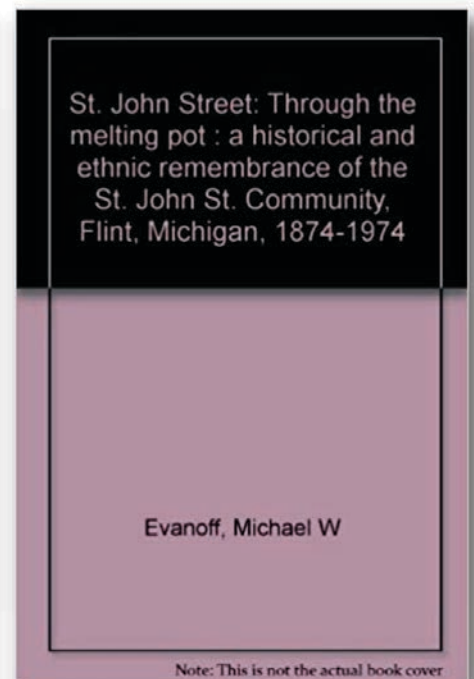
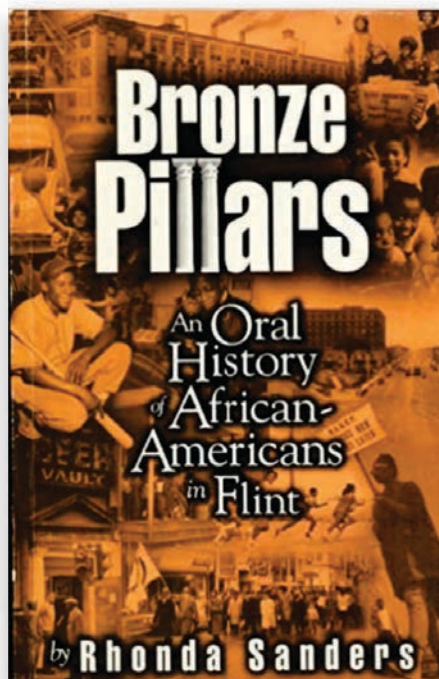
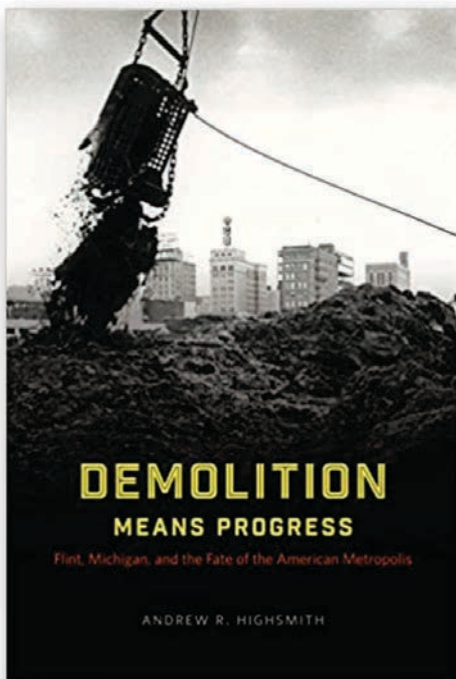
Additional Readings on St. John Street Neighborhood History

Several books delve more deeply into the St. John Street neighborhood's rich history and civic life than covered in this St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial Plan. Sources for additional reading include:

Demolition Means Progress: Flint, Michigan, and the Fate of the American Metropolis by Andrew R. Highsmith (The University of Chicago Press, 2015)

Bronze Pillars: An Oral History of African-Americans in Flint by Rhonda Sanders (Alfred P. Sloan Museum Press, 1995)

St. John Street: Through the Melting Pot: A Historical and Ethnic Remembrance of the St. John Street Community, Flint, Michigan, 1874-1974 by Michael W. Evanoff (Edelweiss Press, 4th edition, 1989)



INTRODUCTION

Project Overview

In July 2021, Mayor Neeley met with members of the St. John Street Historical Committee, expressed his support for development of the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial, and acknowledged the significance of the St. John neighborhood in Flint's history and legacy.

In order to determine the specific vision and budget for the memorial development, as well as the City's financial commitment to the project, Mayor Neeley asked the St. John Street Historical Committee to develop a plan for the memorial. The City Department of Planning & Development committed staff support for the planning process, drawing on strengths from neighborhood planners and the City's parks coordinator. The collaboration between the St. John Street Historical Committee and the City of Flint was part of Flint's Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation work as part of the City of Flint Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.

The process of developing the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial Plan was a placemaking initiative to create a rich and collective vision for a memorial to honor the existence and experience of living in St. John Street neighborhood. This placemaking effort centered on creating a physical memorial where people can gather and engage, to remember or learn about the neighborhood's history. The selected site for the memorial within the historic St. John Street neighborhood builds on the City's existing commitment to maintain West Boulevard Park, and builds on the existing recreational assets for pedestrians/bicyclists, aesthetically pleasing river view, and connections to other recreational destination sites through the Flint River Trail, which runs along the eastern stretch of the neighborhood. Engagement with the larger network of St. John Street families was an essential step for developing design recommendations that authentically reflect lived experiences in St. John Street neighborhood.

In the "Memorial Features & Design" section, this memorial plan identifies shovel-ready projects and a corresponding budget to be implemented by the City with support from community partners. This plan leverages the City of Flint's commitment of funding, staffing and maintenance for the project to garner additional financial support to bring the St. John Streeters' vision for the memorial to fruition.

What is placemaking?

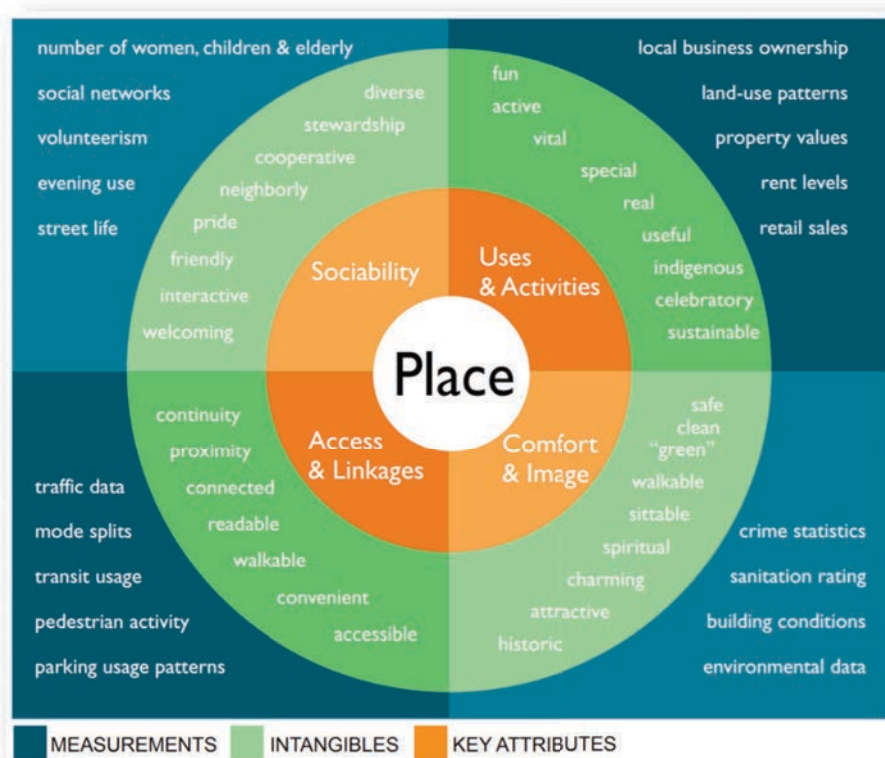
Placemaking is “making a Public Space a Living Space.”
 It is the art of creating public “places of the soul”
 that uplift and help us connect to each other.
 - Project for Public Spaces (PPS)

Excerpt from Placemaking Chicago:

“Placemaking is a people-centered approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Put simply, it involves looking at, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work and play in a particular space, to discover needs and aspirations. This information is then used to create a common vision for that place. The vision can evolve quickly into an implementation strategy, beginning with small-scale, do-able improvements that can immediately bring benefits to public spaces and the people who use them.

“Placemaking can be used to improve all of the spaces that comprise the gathering places within a community – its streets, sidewalks, parks, buildings, and other public spaces – so they invite greater interaction between people and foster healthier, more social, and economically viable communities.

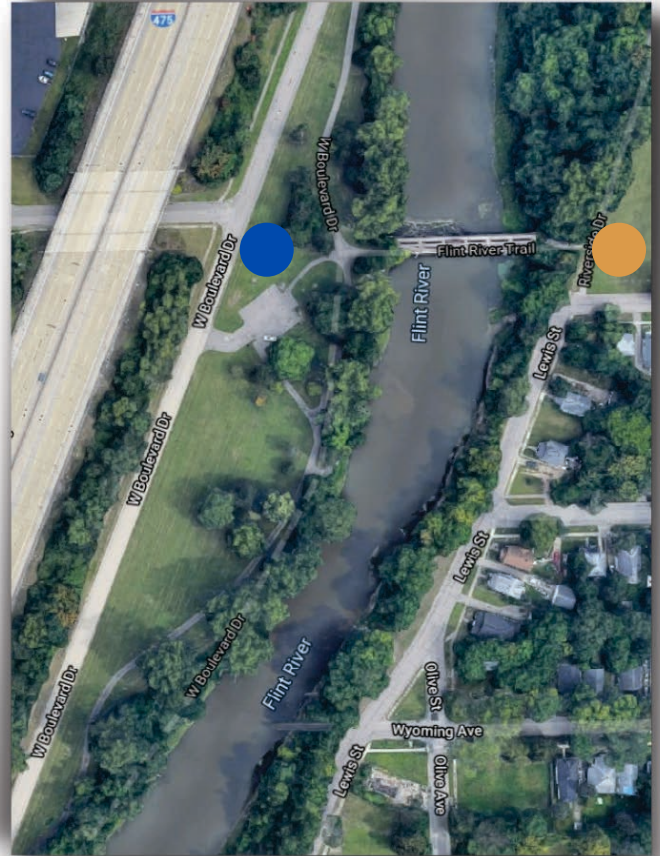
“But Placemaking is not just the act of building or fixing up a space; it is a process that fosters the creation of vital public destinations – the kind of places where people feel a strong stake in their communities and commitment to making things better. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration and potential, creating good public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and economic well-being.” (Source: Placemaking Chicago <http://www.placemakingchicago.com/about/>)



This image illustrates the Project for Public Spaces placemaking framework, which guides how to develop successful places. According to the PPS, “successful [places] have four key qualities: they are accessible; people are engaged in activities there; the space is comfortable and has a good image; and finally, it is a social place: one where people meet each other and take people when they come to visit.

Overview of Existing Site

West Boulevard Park is the primary site identified for the memorial, running between W. Boulevard Street and the Flint River for nearly the entire length of the historic neighborhood. Importantly, the park was enjoyed by St. John residents when the neighborhood was at its peak. The park offers a unique recreational and memorial experience within the St. John neighborhood, with a beautiful view of the Flint River from its west side and an existing 0.7 mile non-motorized paved path through the length of the park, regularly bringing pedestrians and bicyclists into the park. As part of the larger 27-mile Flint River Trail, the West Boulevard stretch of the trail corridor helps to connect downtown Flint and Flint neighborhoods to out-county Genesee County Parks assets such as Stepping Stone Falls, as well as the state-wide Iron Belle Trail. The 12.4-acre West Boulevard Park connects to 68.9-acre Whaley Park, just outside of the St. John Street neighborhood, on the east side of the Flint River via the Massachusetts Dam.



● West Boulevard Park ● Whaley Park

The memorial would strengthen West Boulevard Park by adding more engaging features such as a pavilion and a history-inspired memorial walk along the existing non-motorized trail, and replacing dilapidated benches with new ones. The investment is anticipated to attract more families as visitors to the park for longer visits. With more eyes on the park, the increased presence of park visitors would serve to increase safety in the park and, by extension, the St. John Neighborhood Memorial. Investing in the memorial at West Boulevard Park would also offer a new recreational experience for the populated neighborhood surrounding Whaley Park, in close walking distance from the east side of the Flint River. Building the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial in an established City of Flint park leverages the City's existing long-term commitment to basic park maintenance such as mowing, to the extent possible through the parks millage. Enhancing West Boulevard Park will also increase the likelihood of the Keep Genesee County Beautiful/Genesee County Parks Adopt A Park Program securing a volunteer park adopter to support general cleanliness, conditions and programming in the park.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & METHODOLOGY

St. John Street Historical Committee/City of Flint Collaboration

Between July-December 2021, the St. John Street Historical Committee and City of Flint neighborhood planning/park coordinator staff met on a regular basis to identify a site for the memorial, develop a timeline for the planning process, propose a list of key elements for the memorial, organize a large-scale community visioning event, and synthesize community recommendations into an actionable plan.



During this time, the Historical Committee and City staff fostered a co-learning collaborative environment and co-developed the memorial planning process. The Historical Committee: graciously educated City staff about St. John history; dedicated four monthly meetings to this project plus several additional preparatory meetings; provided historical photos for inspiration at the community visioning event and memorial plan preparation; served as the bridge between the project and “St. John Streeters;” coordinated a large mailing to promote the community visioning event, and made recommendations regarding community preferences for the memorial. To support the Historical Committee, City staff: researched neighborhood history in City archives; set up a shared space virtual space for multiple community partners to share relevant historical documents with the Historical Committee; provided data and maps; developed professional recommendations for viable next steps; developed materials for the community visioning event; and provided overall coordination of the memorial planning process. This dedicated collaboration made it possible to move the plan from concept to print by the end of the year while generating robust community engagement.

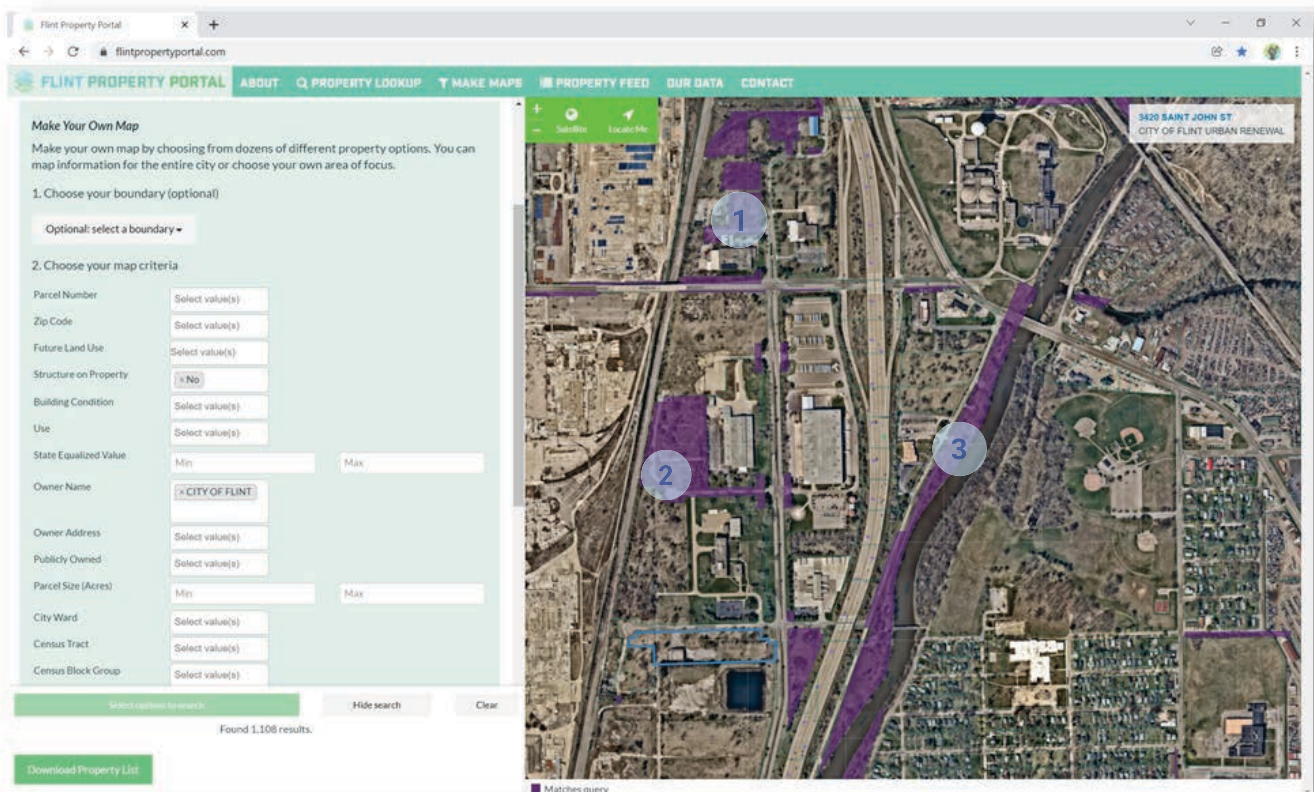
The timeline for the memorial planning process was an abbreviated version of the City’s Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI) process for engaging neighborhood associations in creating neighborhood-scale plans for community improvement. While the NPI planning process traditionally spans a 1-2 year timeframe, the neighborhood plans produced through it span a much larger geographic area than the proposed memorial and address a wider variety of community challenges such as blight, crime, and enhancing a variety of neighborhood assets. For the purposes of planning the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial, once the memorial site was selected in October 2021, the timeline for next steps was developed, with the end goal of having the memorial plan ready for presentation to Mayor Neeley in December 2021.

Site Selection

Using data from the Flint Property Portal, City of Flint staff identified three potential locations for the memorial. All three locations offered large tracts of City-owned land within the historic St. John Street neighborhood. Starting memorial planning from a location where the City had site control was important for enabling the City to build the memorial without incurring acquisition costs or undue delays. The three site options were:

- 1) Black Avenue/Karoly Street residentially-zoned parcels overgrown with trees after the houses were demolished, located at the isolated northern end of the neighborhood in what is now the St. John Industrial Park, off of James P. Cole Blvd., north of Stewart Avenue.
- 2) A large Alabama Avenue parcel offset from James P. Cole Blvd., zoned for industrial use next to the Buick City brownfield that appears to have been consolidated from at least 8 residential parcels and previously only used for residential use.
- 3) The long and narrow existing West Boulevard Park from Leith Street to Dort Hwy.

After site visits and further discussions, West Boulevard Park was selected as the proposed memorial site.



Map of Flint Property Portal search results for City-owned vacant lots in the St. John Street neighborhood. (1) Black Avenue/Karoly Street (2) Alabama Avenue (3) West Boulevard Park. St. John Street Community Center/Park parcel (3420 St. John Street) is outlined in blue for reference.

The Historical Committee and City staff visited the sites to note the benefits and drawbacks of each site, and City staff prepared a recommendation for the site selection after completing additional background research regarding the historic use and any known environmental conditions of each site. The Historical Committee quickly eliminated the Black/Avenue/Karoly Street site option, because the location was outside of the core St. John Street neighborhood area. The site was also not well suited for the memorial because it is in an isolated location with no connection to a current populated neighborhood. While a large and visually attractive site in the middle of the historic neighborhood, the Alabama Avenue option carried prohibitively expensive and time-consuming start-up costs due to the need to re-zone the parcel for community open space use after completing a costly environmental assessment and potential environmental remediation to address likely spillover pollution from Buick City, which would likely consume all of the City funding available for the memorial. It appears that the Alabama Avenue land was set aside for industrial use after the houses were demolished, but never repurposed. During the site visit, Historic Committee members shared memories of the houses and original street layout, and kept the site option in the running.

Through further deliberation, the Historic Committee and City came to the consensus that West Boulevard Park was the only viable site option, due to:

- its shovel-ready condition.
- availability of existing assets, like the paved trail which would satisfy the Historical Committee's desire for a walking path as part of the memorial and allow more funding to be allocated to other memorial features.
- proximity to a populated neighborhood and presence of park users that helped to create safety for memorial visitors.
- the Flint River as a unique water feature.
- more opportunities to leverage partnerships to seek funding, such as with the Genesee County Parks and Flint River Watershed Coalition.
- the City's existing commitment for ongoing maintenance so that funding for the memorial could be focused on paying for the memorial features rather than setting aside a portion for basic site maintenance.

Community Visioning Design Charrette



The design charrette engaged forty-one “St. John Streeters” and their family members. It was attended by two participants from two different media groups that were filming documentaries about the St. John Street neighborhood, and was supported by one City of Flint staff member and one City of Flint AmeriCorps member.

Once the site was selected, the Historical Committee and City jointly held a 3-hour community visioning event on November 6, 2021. The format for the event was based on the City’s Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI) charrette process for engaging residents in developing neighborhood-scale plans for community improvement.

The overarching goals for the session were to:

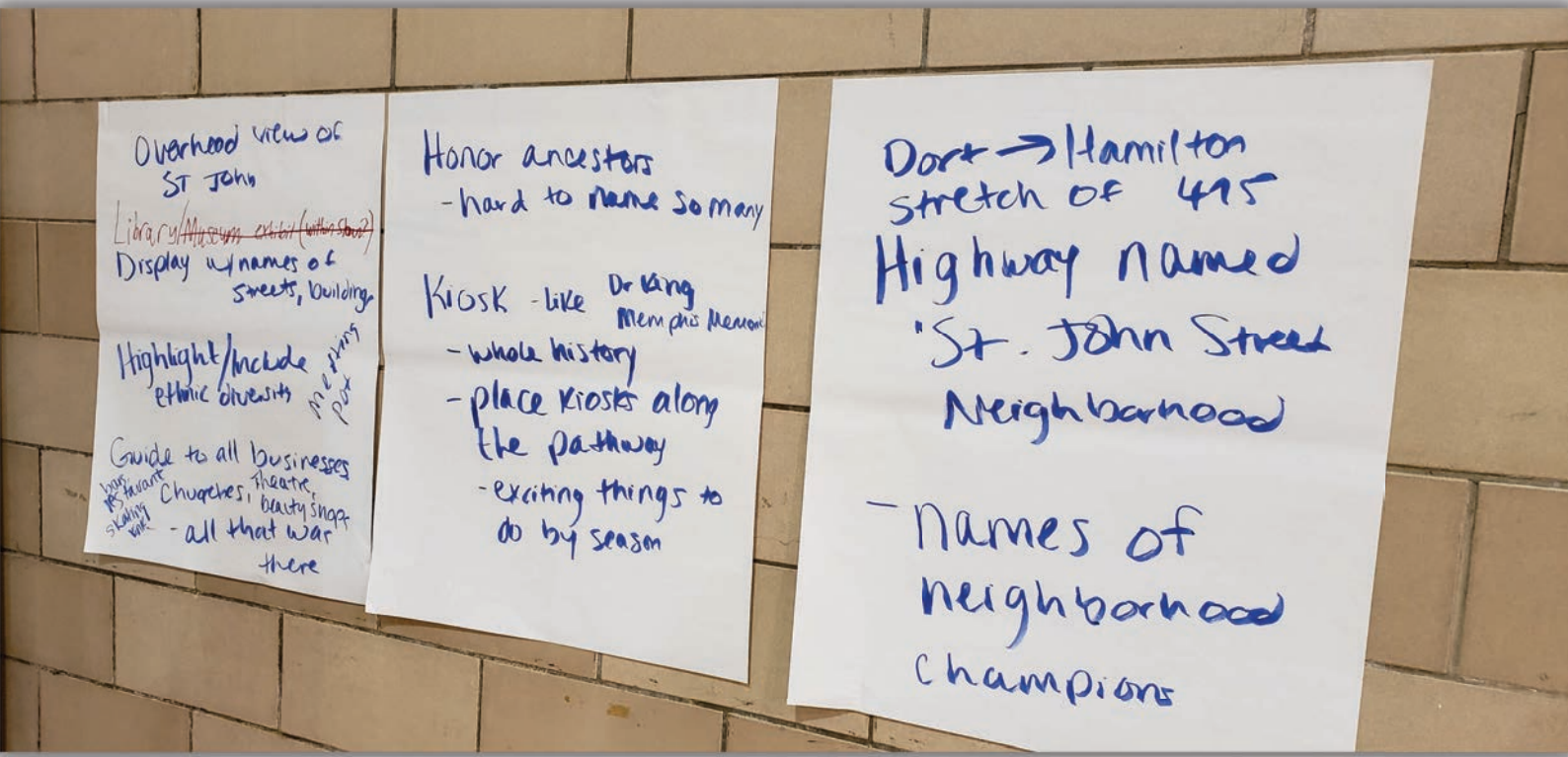
- 1) paint a community vision for what the memorial would look and feel like;
- 2) build on the Historical Committee’s high-level recommendations for memorial features to identify and start to prioritize specific design elements, such as who could be featured as statues along the memorial walk; and,
- 3) engage the larger St. John Street community in development of the memorial and provide an opportunity for the community to generate additional ideas for the memorial design that were not already identified by the Historical Committee.



In preparation for the event, the St. John Street Historical Committee organized foundational stakeholder engagement opportunities. The Historical Committee: identified key priorities for the memorial design at its monthly meetings; extended invitations for the design charrette to St. John Streeters and the broader Flint community; provided captioned photos of the St. John Street neighborhood (primarily from 2020 and 2021 calendars) to inspire creative thinking of participants during the design charrette; and provided feedback on how the NPI process would be customized for memorial planning. The Historical Committee also supported logistics such as reserving the James E. Kennedy Center the event location and managing the large promotional mailing.

Based on Historical Committee guidance, City of Flint staff developed the overall framework and materials for the design charrette. Staff time was committed to develop: printed and digital promotional materials; an overall community visioning facilitator guide for use by the City and Historical Committee members; a table discussion guide for facilitators of small-group activities; a poster-sized aerial map of West Boulevard Park; a visual guide for example memorial features (e.g. statues, historical signage); and a visual guide to West Boulevard Park’s existing conditions. City staff assembled these materials, print-outs of the St. John Street calendar pages, refreshments, and supplies to support interactive participant engagement such as pens, post-it notes, blank sheets of paper, and sticker dots for marking on the map. Written and visual charrette materials are provided in the Appendix.





The charrette achieved its goals, painting a unified, community-backed and community-generated vision for what the memorial would look and feel like. Participants unanimously affirmed the Historical Committee’s recommendations for key memorial elements that included a pavilion, memorial walking path with statues and benches, and historical signs showing the layout of the streets in the neighborhood before “urban renewal.” Participants generated additional creative elements for the memorial at West Boulevard Park, such as incorporating historical kiosks inspired by the MLK Memorial in Tennessee as a format for interpretive signage, and additional opportunities to extend the reach of the memorial through other sites through partnerships such as at the Flint Cultural Center, Bishop International Airport and working with MDOT to commemorate the neighborhood with a sign above the neighborhood on I-475.

Deliverables from the design charrette included notes from small-group discussion, maps with recommended locations marked for placement of various memorial features, notes on large sheets of paper that captured overall report-outs from table discussions and consensus decisions, and an overall excitement for the development of a robust memorial that truly honored the neighborhood and participants’ lived experiences in it.

Final decisions regarding design recommendations would be made by the Historical Committee at subsequent meetings. All charrette participants were invited to participate in the Historical Committee meetings overall and follow-up conversations with the City to finalize design recommendations and prepare the memorial plan document.

The Historical Committee developed the initial vision and design principles for the memorial, which were further refined during the design charrette and at subsequent Historical Committee meetings. These design principles shaped the charrette process by creating a starting list of desired memorial elements, which allowed design participants a starting place for envisioning their future experience of visiting the memorial. The design charrette fleshed out the vision for design features and experience.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Design Parameters

Prior to the design charrette, the St. John Street Historical Committee and City of Flint developed design parameters to create a desirable and implementable memorial. Consensus decisions were that the memorial design must:

- Locate all memorial park features within the St. John Street neighborhood proper (i.e. West Boulevard Park) rather than spilling into Whaley Park.
- Feature interactive elements for memorial visitors including a pavilion and memorial walking path.
- Accommodate large St. John Historical Committee gatherings.
- Provide safe recreational experiences.
- Be grounded in current realities of what was financially viable and maintainable by the City (e.g. viable location, building materials that were unlikely to be vandalized, taking into account the lack of budget for electrical grid expansion/utility maintenance).

Key Design Principles & Elements

The Historical Committee developed the initial vision and design principles for the memorial, which were further refined during the design charrette and at subsequent Historical Committee meetings. These design principles shaped the charrette process by creating a starting list of desired memorial elements, which allowed design participants a starting place for envisioning their future experience of visiting the memorial. The design charrette fleshed out this vision for design features and experience.

Key design principles and elements are to:

- Bring the history of the neighborhood back to life for current and future generations, keeping memories of the neighborhood alive through multi-generational elements.
- Cover a rich and diverse array of St. John history through engaging elements that highlight the multicultural experience of life in the neighborhood.
- Build from existing park and neighborhood assets, such as placing statues of St. John Street legends along the existing paved path in West Boulevard Park.
- Develop essential elements including a historical marker plaque like the one at Chevy Commons, a large pavilion, and a memorial walking path with features like historical signs (images with captions and/or a paragraph of information), benches and statues.
- Leverage partnership opportunities to expand the memorial beyond West Boulevard Park to eliminate blight, visually cue travelers that they are passing over or through St. John Street neighborhood, and expand the reach of the memorial through partners in other high-traffic community spaces such as Sloan Museum.

Memorial Concept Evolution

Over the five-month planning process jointly organized by the St. John Street Historical Committee and the City of Flint, the concept for the memorial evolved as background research presented new information and community engagement honed the vision for a meaningful and implementable memorial. New information and realities expanded, contracted and again expanded the memorial vision, and refined it into one that would make all parties proud.

When the St. John Street Historical Committee first set out to create greater recognition for the neighborhood that St. John Streeters will always call home, its vision was to make the St. John Street Community Center a state-recognized historical site with a Michigan Historical Marker plaque.



The City's sale of the property to a commercial entity in August 2021 limited this option, and the Historical Committee re-envisioned the memorial as a full-scale memorial park with a fully plumbed pavilion and large parking lot that could accommodate its 300-person annual reunion, a walking path, and benches with historical features.

Several current conditions in Flint constrained the feasibility of developing some amenities to the level initially desired. The Historical Committee and City of Flint explored the realities of the memorial site's size, the need to ensure regular use to justify investments such as an expanded parking lot, and ongoing maintenance constraints such as the current and foreseeable lack of funding to maintain electrical service and plumbed restrooms. Some aspects of the design parameters were negotiated between the Historical Committee and the City based on current realities for creating a sustainable memorial. The Historical Committee kept the design concept for a large pavilion and enhanced parking, and was graciously flexible regarding the need to reduce the pavilion size and eliminate the utilities associated with the pavilion. Any initial ideas that were deemed no longer fit to be current priorities for the memorial development, will be retained by the City of Flint as ideas for possible future investments in the memorial if funding and maintenance opportunities change in the coming years. Work-arounds being explored include on-site porta-potties for restroom access, alternative parking options, and solar lighting.

The following recommendations for action reflect the balance between perfect ideals and ways to achieve a meaningful, breath-taking and sustainable memorial.

MEMORIAL FEATURES & DESIGN

St. John Streeters' unified vision of a memorial that honors their ancestors, brings the history of the neighborhood to life, and reflects the diversity of people and life in the St. John Street neighborhood will be achieved through thoughtfully selected memorial features and designs.

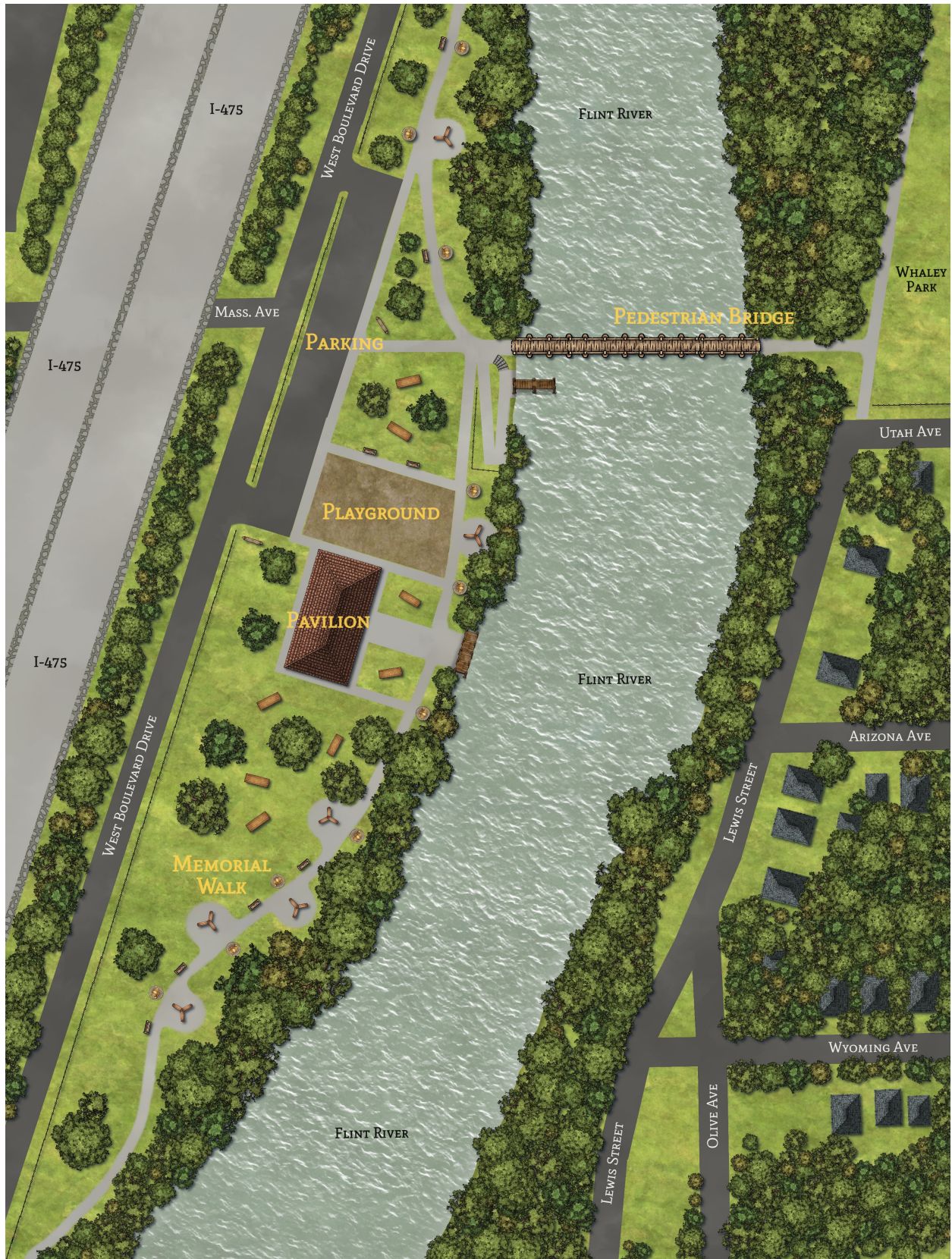
Efforts are underway to formally rename West Boulevard Park as St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial Park. The park will be transformed from a simple park with a walking path and overgrown river overlooks to a cohesive park experience and an engaging destination featuring:

- a memorial walking path with historically-themed statues, benches, interpretive historical signs, a historical marker plaque, and benches;
- a pavilion with accompanying amenities such as picnic tables and grills for barbeques;
- a historically themed playground designed to engage multiple generations;
- a walking bridge to replace the crumbling Massachusetts Dam;
- a repaved and expanded parking lot near Massachusetts Avenue;
- restored river overlooks and dock;
- trail connections to the above features and an expanded parking lot; and
- a historical mural covering graffiti on the W. Boulevard Drive retaining wall for I-475/Leith Street Bridge.

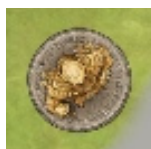
Partnership opportunities are identified to support the estimated financial investment needed to make the memorial park a reality as well as other potential complementary memorial features at the Flint Cultural Center, I-475 and Bishop International Airport.

Other desired ideas for expanding or improving the memorial park, such as expanding the footprint of the park and adding solar lighting, are recorded for future consideration if possible.

Aerial View of the Overall Memorial Park Concept



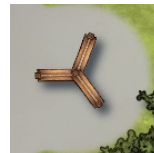
Key:



Statue



Bench



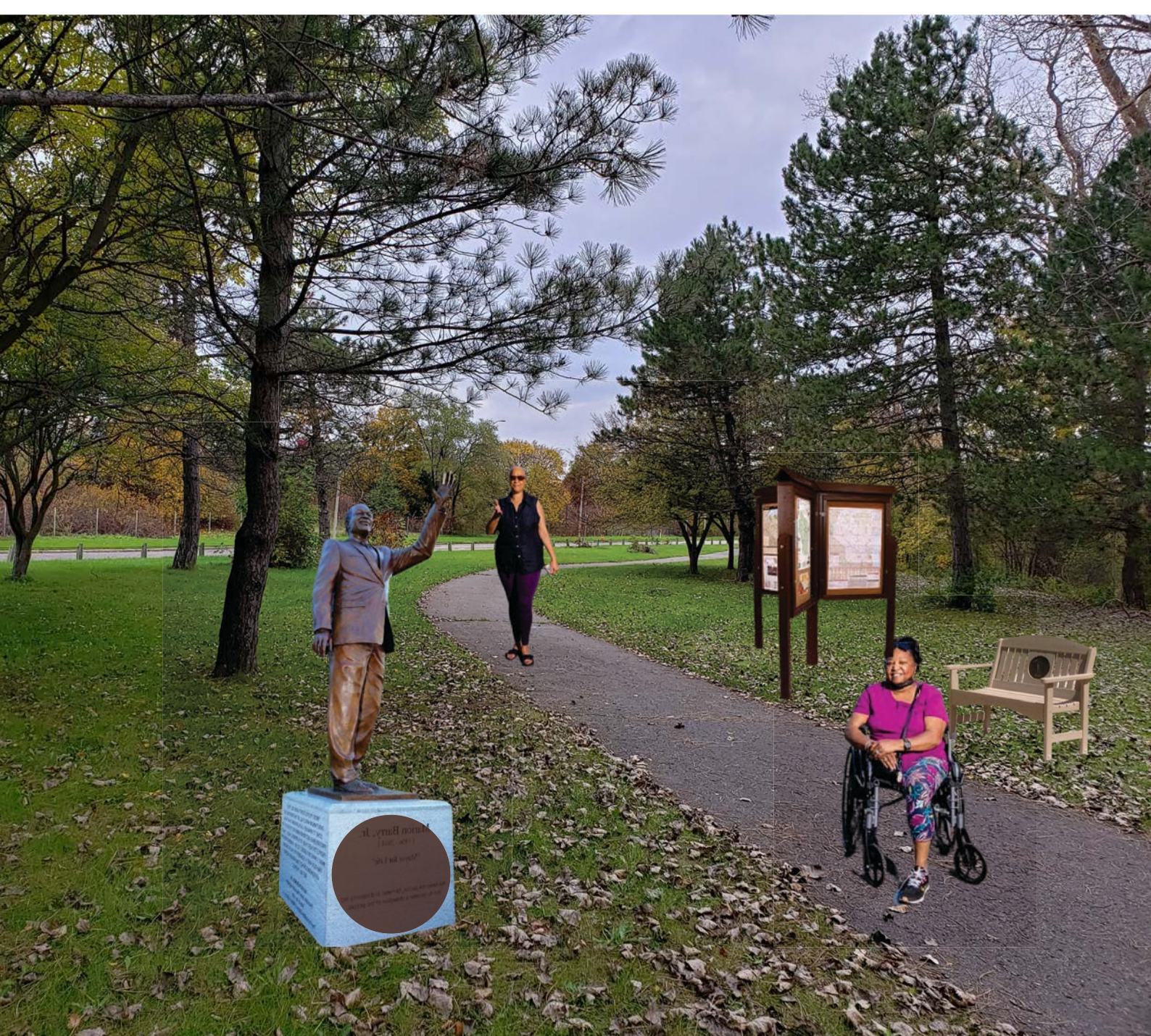
Historical Sign



Picnic Table

Memorial Walking Path

The memorial walking path will be a central feature of the memorial, expanding upon the existing asset of the Flint River Trail walking/biking path that traverses the length of West Boulevard Park. Along the memorial path, park visitors will encounter statues, benches, and interpretive historical signs and Michigan Historical Marker plaque. ADA-accessible trail connections will be made as necessary from the trail to new amenities of the park including the pavilion. Memorial elements will be concentrated near active spaces of the park, and the precise location for each element is to be determined.



Statues

Bronze, life-size statues of prominent St. John community leaders with plaques describing the given person will be spread out along and installed next to the memorial walking path. The statues and corresponding signs will be similar to those installed in downtown Flint and in front of City Hall to highlight the achievements of wealthy white Flint founders and autoworkers. St. John Street Memorial Park will feature the first public art installation in all of Flint to memorialize multiple Black community members in statue form.

This art installation will engage park users in learning about community leaders who grew up in the St. John Street neighborhood through at least eleven statues, such as of:

- 1) Judge Ollie Bivins, Jr. - neighborhood attorney, chief trial lawyer, municipal judge, and circuit court judge
- 2) Ms. Odell Broadway - multi-role community leader including consultant to the C.S. Mott Foundation on educational/community engagement, home economics teacher, nutrition program manager, and school counselor
- 3) Ms. Marion Coates-Williams - first Black teacher hired by Flint Board of Education
- 4) Mr. George Friley - policeman and businessman
- 5) Mr. Leo and Mrs. Irene Greene - funeral home owners/operators
- 6) Lillian Huddleston - community activist
- 7) Dr. Leonidas Leach - family doctor
- 8) Ms. Georgia Hyche - community activist
- 9) Mr. Floyd McCree - community leader for model schools & integrated housing, and first Black mayor of the City of Flint
- 10) Woodrow Stanley - former mayor of Flint
- 11) Mr. Sam Williams - radio broadcaster at WAMM Mighty 1420, and post office supervisor



Beloved community leader Ms. Odell Broadway will be honored as a statue.

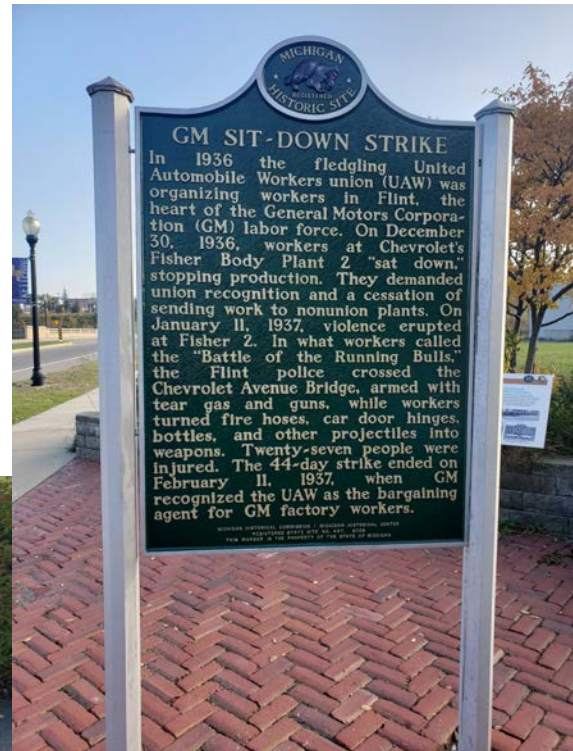


Signage

Signage will commemorate and bring alive the rich, multi-faceted history of the neighborhood for future generations to know, and will help to make the park a special destination in Flint. The signs will consist of:

- 1) a new park name sign, at the memorial entrance and near Dort Highway.
- 2) a state-approved Michigan Historical Marker plaque at the memorial entrance and near Dort Highway.
- 3) historical interpretive signs in the form of six 6-panel informational kiosks describing and illustrating the depth and diversity of the neighborhood's history and its historical significance in Flint.
- 4) an interactive map of the neighborhood showing all of the neighborhood streets and how the neighborhood grew and changed over time.
- 5) a Flint River Trail/Watershed Sign similar to the one on the other side of the Flint River in Lewis Street Park.

To tell the full story of the neighborhood's history, it is essential that that the historical signs illuminate what it was like to live in the neighborhood, including the layout of streets that were erased when nearly all of the houses and commercial buildings were torn down for "urban renewal" and the neighborhood was substantially reconfigured for heavy commercial and industrial use. An intentional effort should be made to make the design of the interpretive signs as interactive and engaging as possible for park users.



Photos of local sign examples: Michigan Historical Marker and interpretive historical sign bringing history to life at Chevy Commons, and the Flint River Trail & Watershed sign at Lewis Street Park.

Overall content of the seven historical sign elements dedicated to St. John Street history will be:

- The Michigan Historical Marker describing the importance of the neighborhood on the Flint community's heritage, serving as a signpost of historical significance.
- The interactive neighborhood map including a 3D relief map of the neighborhood at its peak and overlay aerial maps of the neighborhood at its peak, during urban renewal and present day that park users can slide over the 3D relief. The maps will name all of the streets at each moment of history illustrated in each map.
- Kiosk 1 - Overall historical summary of the neighborhood, racial and ethnic diversity within the neighborhood, and the history of/ invitation to participate in the St. John Street Historical Committee.
- Kiosk 2 - Educational leaders & organizations, and the neighborhood's two schools (Fairview Elementary School, and Roosevelt Elementary School)
- Kiosk 3 - Community leaders & organizations (including the St. John Street Community Center), business leaders & organizations, and Medical leaders & organizations
- Kiosk 4 - Athletes, olympians and athletic teams/programs
- Kiosk 5 - Neighborhood life by season of the year
- Kiosk 6 - Guide to all businesses (e.g. theater, beauty shops, restaurants, skating rink), streets, churches, etc. that were there, to be on a display that you touch



Example of 6-sided kiosk (Image Source: <https://www.outdoordisplaycases.com/>)

Several partnerships have already been cultivated to support the development of the historical interpretive signage.

- Sloan Museum is committed to working with the St. John Street Historical Committee to curate the written content and historical photographs for the signs and map.
- Dr. Benjamin Gaydos, professor of the University of Michigan-Flint Design Studio class has committed to working with the St. John Street Historical Committee and Sloan Museum on the visual design of the signs, as his class has previously done to develop the layouts for interpretive signs throughout Flint's Max Brandon Park in Flint.
- The Genesee Conservation District has stepped up as a project partner for the Flint River Trail & Watershed sign and other connections.
- The ongoing partnership with the Genesee County Parks' Keep Genesee County Beautiful Program for park maintenance and enhancements will be leveraged for planning the placement of the signs.

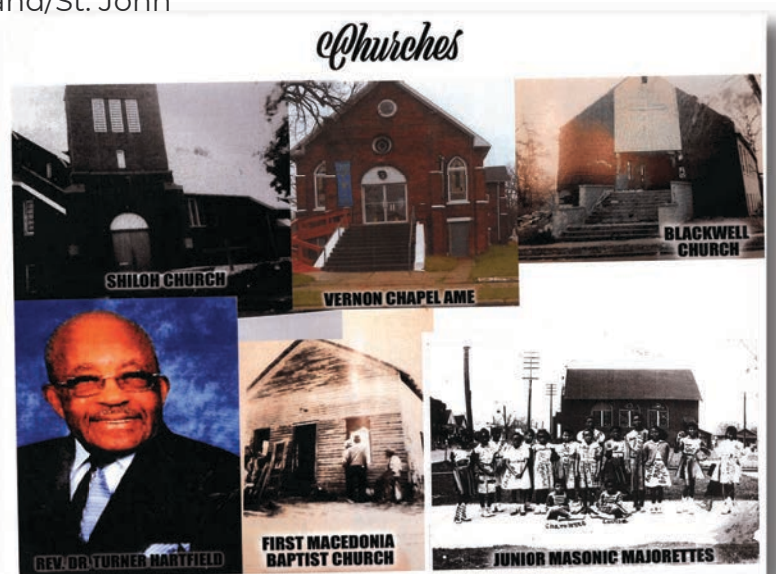
Benches

Seating is needed in the park and will provide space for memorial visitors to rest and reflect.

Nine benches along the walking trail will feature the name, original location (street address and/or corner) and image of a neighborhood church as important historical sites for life in St. John Street neighborhood. The benches will be constructed of durable recycled plastic with the church information either engraved in the back boards of the bench or on a plaque that is anchored to the back of the bench. Two of the benches will be located next to the playground.

All known neighborhood churches and faith centers will be included:

- Blackwell African Methodist Episcopal (AME) - on Central Avenue, in front of Fairview Elementary School)
- Church of God in Christ (COGIC) - southeast corner of State St/St. John
- James Chapel Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) - Campau Street
- Macedonia - Hickory Street near corner of Michigan Avenue/St. John Street
- New Zion - corner of Rhode Island/St. John Street
- Sanctified Church - corner of Dakota/St. John
- Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church - 3420 St. John at corner of Massachusetts Avenue/ St. John Street
- St. Joseph Hungarian Catholic Church - 1309 Hickory Street
- Vernon Chapel - corner of Rhode Island/St. John



Example bench (<https://www.plasteak.com/>) and photos of several St. John Street neighborhood churches from the St. John Historical Committee's 2021 calendar.

Pavilion

Park use during the coronavirus pandemic skyrocketed in Flint and across the country, as outdoor recreation spaces became one of the safest places for friends and loved ones to gather. Many more community members reconnected with nature, making outdoor recreation activities a regular part of daily life. This groundswell in park use is a trend that will continue for many years to come, and Flint parks must develop accordingly.

To support such development, a 50 foot by 70 foot open air pavilion for multi-weather use will be built in the southern end of the park's wide stretch of open lawn. The pavilion will feature 15 picnic tables, and 5 steel, group-size charcoal BBQ grills in the lawn outside of the pavilion.

The pavilion can be used for a variety of activities including family gatherings (weddings, reunions, birthdays, etc.) and educational programming (e.g. the Flint River Watershed Coalition's water quality and river education programs). This large pavilion would fill a gap in the City of Flint parks system by adding a unique public outdoor gathering place in north Flint, where no other large public pavilions are available. Nearby Whaley Park has no pavilion for park users. The pavilion also serves the important and special purpose of offering the only public gathering place remaining in the historic St. John Street neighborhood.



Example pavilion
from Danville, VA

Multi-Generational Playground

A historically-themed playground will engage multiple generations of park users while raising awareness about neighborhood history. Families visiting the park will play and receive a history lesson at the same time. The visual design will be themed to mimic buildings from St. John Street Neighborhood, such as the St. John Street Community Center, and incorporate historical signage about the neighborhood into the playground design, as achieved in Hammond, Indiana's Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, and Bronx, NY's Van Nest Park, and Gainesville, Florida's Depot Park.

To engage and keep residents of all ages active and healthy, the playground will include features for people aged 2-5 (tot lot), 5-12 (elementary) and 13+ (middle school-adult), as well as include inclusive playspace design (e.g. sensory play, and wheelchair accessibility).

Realistically, the park will need to be scaled to fit the park space available to the south of the pavilion.

The St. John Street Historical Committee looks forward to collaborating with the Keep Genesee County Beautiful Program of the Genesee County Parks and the City of Flint to seek grant funding for the playground.

The playground will be built between the parking lot and the pavilion, immediately south of West Boulevard Park's southern parking lot located near the corner of Massachusetts Avenue/W. Boulevard Drive.



Top to bottom: Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, (Hammond, IN), Van Nest Park (Bronx, NY), and Depot Park (Gainesville, FL)

Parking Lot Repaving & Expansion

In order to make the parking lot functional and large enough for the anticipated influx of park users, the existing small 6,000 sq. ft. parking lot near Massachusetts Street (closest to memorial features) will need to be repaved, expanded, and improved for ADA compliance. The safer, more traffic efficient redeveloped parking lot would expand by an additional approximately 12,000 sq. ft., contour with the Flint River Trail, have a one-way traffic flow, and angled parking spaces, including more ADA accessible parking spaces. Permeable pavement and landscaping will be used for environmental sustainability and to improve the appearance of the parking lot.



Photo of existing conditions (top) and conceptual map of re-envisioned design (bottom)

Massachusetts Dam & Flint River Outlooks/Dock

The existing Massachusetts Dam, Flint River overlooks and Flint River dock for river access physically and visually connect West Boulevard Park to Whaley Park and surrounding populated neighborhood, and need improvement to be safe and used.

- Massachusetts Dam, crumbling and graffitied with cuss words, needs to be removed and replaced with a walking bridge to connect the neighborhoods. The City of Flint's current American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for infrastructure improvement offers a perfect funding source to achieve this long-awaited infrastructure investment.
- A new dock needs to be installed for river access (e.g. kayak launch) next to the Massachusetts Dam on its south side. A partnership between the St. John Street Historical Committee, Flint River Watershed Coalition and City of Flint is recommended to fund the dock replacement.
- Multiple overlooks are currently blocked by vegetation that has overgrown what was once a clearing to view the Flint River at several points along the Flint River Trail in West Boulevard Park. Prioritizing the vegetation being cleared as part of regular parks maintenance can be achieved for no additional cost under the City of Flint maintenance agreement with the Genesee County Parks.



Photos left to right: existing Massachusetts Dam and example replacement pedestrian bridge (<http://www.excelbridge.com/>)

W. Boulevard Drive Mural

The St. John Street Historical Committee looks forward to partnering with the Flint Public Art Project on the design and painting of a large, vibrant mural dedicated to the St. John Street neighborhood. The 6,000 sq. ft. mural would replace graffiti that currently covers the I-475 retaining wall on West. Boulevard Dr. near Leith Street and make West Boulevard Park feel like a safer place to play, exercise, relax and reflect.

The Flint Public Art project has agreed to prioritize the mural in its 2023 grant requests. The mural design will be refined with the chosen mural artist through the Flint Public Art Project. The current vision for the mural graphics is:

- Left side of mural: picture history of the community of St. John starting in 1897
- Center of mural: the 3 main buildings of St. John Street neighborhood (St. John Street Community Center, Fairview Elementary School, Roosevelt Elementary School), surrounded by images of businesses and houses, and highlighting the diversity of people who lived and worked in the neighborhood
- Right side of mural: notable athletes who grew up in the neighborhood



A possibility exists for this stretch of I-475 to be redeveloped in the coming years as part of the I-475 reconstruction project. The St. John Street Historical Committee is seeking necessary approvals for the mural from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the City of Flint, with support from the City of Flint Department of Planning & Development. If I-475 is reconstructed in a way that removes or replaces the retaining wall, the Historical Committee will advocate for a mural or alternative memorial component to be built at this same site, given the significance of the original development of I-475 in the destruction of St. John Street neighborhood.

Overgrown brush covering the sidewalk along the west side of W. Boulevard Drive, just south of Massachusetts Avenue, needs to be cleared in order to support pedestrian safety and mural development, maintenance, and access.



Top to bottom: Photos of example retaining wall mural (Artist Ananda Nahu, <https://clevelandtraveler.com/cleveland-mural-guide/>) and existing graffiti on I-475 retaining wall

Budget for Memorial Park Development

Financial investments for the memorial will be achieved through a combination of City of Flint financial contribution, grant funds, and crowdfunding donations. The initial City of Flint investment from proceeds of the St. John Street Community Center sale will be leveraged to raise additional funding to complete the memorial. Continued collaboration between the St. John Street Historical Committee, the City of Flint, and community partners will make fundraising efforts successful. Established and potential partners include: Evergrow, LLC (the new owner of the St. John Street Community Center/St. John Park land at 3420 St. John Street), Flint Institute of Arts, Flint Public Art Project, Flint River Watershed Coalition, Genesee Conservation District, Greater Flint Arts Council, Keep Genesee County Beautiful/Genesee County Parks, Home Depot, Sloan Museum, UAW, and local foundations. While funding for ongoing park maintenance is already in place, the St. John Street Historical Committee is interested in establishing an endowment to support the memorial development and periodic maintenance as needed for the memorial features.

The budget for the memorial is subdivided into core memorial costs totaling \$2,640,750 and capital improvement infrastructure costs for the walking path, dam replacement, and Flint River universal access dock/kayak launch totaling \$6,952,000. While not numerically included in the \$6,952,000, the infrastructure budget includes a placeholder for a broadband Wi-Fi hotspot, with cost to be determined. The estimated budget for memorial park features, infrastructure improvements and recommended funding source(s) for each budget line are provided in the following tables.

The majority of the core memorial costs, \$2,390,750, will be sought through partnerships with community organizations for: nine of the eleven statues, the interactive interpretive map of the neighborhood, pavilion, the Flint River Trail & Watershed sign, all decorative benches, picnic tables, BBQ grills, the playground, paved trail connections, essential landscaping, garbage bins, bollards, and the W. Boulevard Drive Mural.

The City of Flint expects to work with partners to fundraise beyond the initial \$250,000 investment from the sale of the St. John Street Community Center to support the memorial development. The City of Flint is best positioned to initially cover and to kick-start additional fundraising for: one of the eleven statues, the Michigan Historical Marker plaque, the park name sign, interpretive historical sign kiosks, and a portion of the pavilion cost.



Estimated Memorial Cost with Recommended Funding Sources

CORE MEMORIAL FEATURES				
Item	Description	Total Cost	Proposed City of Flint General Fund Commitment	Proposed Grant/Donation Funding Source
Statues	10 single-figure statues at \$125,000 each and 1 two-figure statue at \$250,000	\$1,500,000	\$125,000	\$1,375,000 from grant funding, Evergrow, LLC, and/or crowdfunding (to be sought)
Michigan Historical Marker Plaques	\$250 for application fee 2 signs x \$3,750 for a large 42" x 54" marker with the same text on both sides, including 2 installation posts & shipping. 2 signs x \$500 for installation	\$8,750	\$8,750	
Park Name Signs	\$3,500 for standard City of Flint park name sign, including installation x 2 installation locations	\$7,000	\$7,000	
Interpretive Signage	Interactive map at \$50,000 Six 6-panel kiosks at \$8,000 each including shipping & installation, totalling \$48,000	\$98,000	\$48,000	\$50,000 from grant funding, Evergrow, LLC, and/or crowdfunding (to be sought)
Pavilion	1 50' x 70' pavilion including concrete slab	\$600,000	\$61,250	\$538,750 crowdfunding and/or grant (to be sought)
Flint River Trail & Watershed Sign	36" x 48" sign at \$5,000 including installation	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000 grant in partnership with Genesee Conservation District (to be sought)
Decorative Benches	9 at \$2,000 each with shipping & installation	\$18,000	\$0	\$18,000 crowdfunding and/or grant (to be sought)
Picnic Tables	23 recycled plastic or wood tables with benches at \$1,000 each including shipping & installation (15 for under pavilion, 8 outside of the pavilion)	\$23,000	\$0	\$23,000 grant in partnership with Keep Genesee County Beautiful (to be sought)

Continued on next page.

Estimated Memorial Cost with Recommended Funding Sources continued

CORE MEMORIAL FEATURES				
<i>Item</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>Proposed City of Flint General Fund Commitment</i>	<i>Proposed Grant/Donation Funding Source</i>
BBQ Grills	5 group-size grills at \$1,500 each including shipping & installation	\$7,500	\$0	\$7,500 grant in partnership with Keep Genesee County Beautiful (to be sought)
Playground	Multi-age playground with accessible features	\$200,000	\$0	\$200,000 in partnership grant with Keep Genesee County Beautiful (to be sought)
Trail Connections	Paved trail connections to the parking lot, dock, playground and pavilion, and around memorial elements totalling 9,500 sq. ft. at \$3.00/sq. ft.	\$28,500	\$0	\$28,500 grant or crowdfunding (to be sought)
Landscaping	Tree and other landscaping improvements around memorial	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000 grant in partnership with Genesee Conservation District (to be sought)
Garbage Bins	5 outdoor-grade cans with rain bonnets at \$900 each (2 between pavilion and playground, 1 on either end of parking lot, 1 near dock)	\$4,500	\$0	\$4,500 grant in partnership with Keep Genesee County Beautiful (to be sought)
Replace Bollards	Replace approximately 670 safety bollards along W. Boulevard Drive with wood bollards in hard-packed sand, at \$150 each	\$100,500	\$0	\$100,500 grant in partnership with Keep Genesee County Beautiful (to be sought)
W. Boulevard Drive Mural	6,000 sq ft. coverage	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000 Flint Public Art Project grant (requested)
TOTAL COST OF CORE MEMORIAL FEATURES		\$2,640,750		
TOTAL INITIAL CITY OF FLINT CONTRIBUTION			\$250,000	
TOTAL FUNDRAISING THROUGH GRANTS & DONATIONS				\$2,390,750

Estimated Infrastructure Improvement Cost with Identified Funding Sources

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS				
<i>Item</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>Proposed City of Flint General Fund Commitment</i>	<i>Proposed Grant/Donation Funding Source</i>
Parking Lot Repaving & Expansion	\$22,000 for removal of existing parking lot. \$54,000 to pave parking lot (18,000 sq. ft. x \$3.00/sq. ft., totalling \$54,000) \$1,000 for restriping \$4,000 for landscaping \$11,000 for design engineering	\$92,000	\$0	\$92,000 grant (to be sought)
Dam Removal	165' dam removal \$6,000,000, including design engineering	\$6,300,000	\$0	\$6,300,000 ARPA grant (requested)
Pedestrian Bridge Installation	165' pedestrian bridge \$300,000, including design engineering	\$300,000	\$0	\$300,000 grant (to be sought)
Flint River Access Dock Replacement	Universal access commercial dock/kayak launch, including design engineering	\$80,000	\$0	\$80,000 grant with Flint River Watershed Coalition (to be sought)
Walking Path Repaving	\$90,000 for removal of existing walking path at \$3.00 per sq. ft. \$90,000 for repaving 30,000 sq. ft. trail at \$3.00 per sq. ft.	\$180,000	\$0	\$180,000 grant (to be sought)
Broadband Wi-Fi Access	Cost to be determined		\$0	grant (to be sought)
TOTAL KNOWN COST FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS		\$6,952,000	\$0	

Potential Future Considerations

While not currently feasible or a prioritized given financial and logistical constraints, Mayor Neeley and the St. John Street Historical Committee identified several other desired improvements for the memorial Park. The Historical Committee advocated for the City of Flint to periodically review the following recommendations and implement them if and when possible. Costs for these potential future connections improvements are to be determined.

- Mayor Neeley's vision for activating the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial Park as a destination in north Flint includes making the park broadband Wi-Fi accessible. Broadband internet access is an important component for the redevelopment of both the park and north Flint. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how essential internet access is for basic functioning in modern daily life, reducing disparities in educational attainment and income generation, and the importance of equitable access to outdoor recreation for health promotion and safe recreation options. Making the park a Wi-Fi hot spot will allow park visitors to enjoy the park for longer visits, and better utilize the park as a space to learn and work outdoors. Community education programs and events at the park will benefit from broadband Wi-Fi access, and the need for free public Wi-Fi in Flint has been a topic of discussion for more than a decade. Currently, the City of Flint is doing the preliminary research of exploring logistical options for making the park Wi-Fi accessible. This work includes researching equipment options, assessing whether additional broadband towers are needed and where, and laying the groundwork for required site assessments and environmental surveying. Creating broadband Wi-Fi access is potentially a multi-million dollar endeavor, and is increasingly prioritized within federally-funded infrastructure grant opportunities which are likely sources of funding for this investment.
- Connect the parking lot, playground, pavilion and dock(s) to the City of Flint Police Department's C.A.T.T. Eye Program for added park safety and surveillance.
- Add solar lighting to the pavilion and pedestrian bridge for nighttime use (tied to the C.A.T.T. Eye Program), and add solar lights along the walking trail specifically as ambient light for increased visibility of the statues.
- Add electrical service to the pavilion and add electrical outlets to enable park users to play music, use microphones, display presentations and other electrical uses consistent with park pavilion use for special events.
- Add plumbed bathrooms for on-site restroom access, including a minimum of 4 unisex/family restrooms.
- Add historical elements to the pavilion or area between the pavilion and the playground, such as a large tile floor installation map of the St. John Street neighborhood.
- Close off W. Boulevard Dr. from Leith St. to Massachusetts Street to expand the footprint of the memorial park.
- In partnership with MDOT, add a sound barrier wall between I-475 and the park.
- Install a wide vegetative buffer as a natural fence along the Flint River for added park user safety near the memorial pavilion and playground.
- Apply for and install additional Michigan Historical Markers and/or other memorial elements throughout the original St. John Street neighborhood.

Phasing of Memorial Development

Phasing of the development of the memorial must balance opportunities to implement the most important features of the memorial and a development approach that prevents one improvement from temporarily displacing another, resulting in doubled installation costs.

- Ideally, if ARPA or other federal infrastructure funding will be committed in 2022 for replacement of Massachusetts Dam with a pedestrian bridge, Flint River accessibility/enjoyment improvements should be implemented first to allow clear access for construction equipment, perhaps simultaneously as the pavilion and playground which are sufficiently far away. Improvements such as nearby statues, benches, parking lot repaving/expansion and trail connections then be completed after the dam replacement.
- If ARPA funding is not committed for the dam replacement, forcing the timeline for dam replacement to be pushed back indefinitely, the essential memorial elements should be implemented first, without delay, in the following 3-phase approach.

Phase 1	The Essentials	Playground, pavilion, historical signage, statues, benches, parking lot, trail connections, clean-up of existing river overlooks, etc.
Phase 2	Flint River Accessibility/Enjoyment	Dam replacement with walking bridge and installation of nearby dock and Flint River Trail & Watershed sign
Phase 3	Potential Future Considerations	Park footprint expansion, solar lighting and electrical service, plumbing, etc.

- In either approach, most potential future considerations for memorial improvements should be implemented only after the I-475 reconstruction project has been completed, with the exception of improvements that would not be impacted by the reconstruction project such as adding vegetative buffers near the river.

Connection to Project C.A.T.T. Eye Program



As in all City of Flint parks, an opportunity exists for integrating West Boulevard Park infrastructure with the City of Flint Police Department's Project Crime Area Target Team (C.A.T.T.) Eye program for added park safety and protection.

The Project design consists of real-time crime fighting and community policing aimed at improving quality of life, neighborhood safety, revitalization and growth of local businesses, and aiding FPD's effort to deter, identify, and solve crime. The goal for integrating Project C.A.T.T. Eye in local parks is to make key areas of the park C.A.T.T. Eye monitored, to deter crime and increase park safety.

To make Project C.A.T.T. Eye successful, the Flint Police Department (FPD) role involves monitoring, responding and progress reporting for C.A.T.T. Eye sites. FPD staffs a real-time monitoring crime center, to monitor and analyze videos from the feeds, dispatches officers as necessary, and utilizes archived video to solve crimes. FPD will not be responsible to monitor each location at all times. Project C.A.T.T. Eye gives FPD members the ability to proactively patrol in a more efficient way, including by giving responding officers updates about crimes in progress for first responders. Visually being ahead of crimes in some known hotspots, with the ability to forward resources, even without a call for service. Progress Reporting FPD would keep the City of Flint parks coordinator abreast of crime statistics around monitored parks and report on crime fluctuations at each location.

Monitored areas require the installation of adequate lighting and signage announcing the site as a C.A.T.T. Eye monitored location, and purchase or lease and maintenance of high definition (1080p) outdoor cameras and equipment that will provide video streaming into the Flint Police Department Real Time Crime Center. Cost estimates from C.A.T.T. Eye partners include:

- Signs by Crannie estimates cost material and installation costs of \$858 for wall signs, one 120-volt 6.25" tall green strobe light, and fasteners and electrical connectors.
- Sonitrol estimates the camera costs at \$990 for installation of 4 cameras, plus \$90/month for service.

In most cases, integrating C.A.T.T. Eye with the City parks system will also require new electrical service to the parks.

A cohesive vision for Project C.A.T.T. Eye integration is being developed across City of Flint parks, and West Boulevard Park is an ideal pilot location given development of the St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial.

Partnerships to Develop Complementary Memorial Sites

In addition to the St. John Street Memorial Park concept, the St. John Street community identified complementary locations to extend the reach of the memorial in other high-traffic areas of the Flint community. These additional opportunities to extend the memorial and partnerships are to:

- At the Flint Cultural Center, install a permanent exhibit in Sloan Museum and/or the Flint Public Library through an extension of the Sloan Museum partnership.
- Increase driver visibility of the historic neighborhood over I-475 by installing a “You are in St. John Street Neighborhood” sign and renaming the stretch of highway from Hamilton to Dort Hwy. as “St. John Street Neighborhood” in partnership with MDOT.
- Installing a historical statue or sign kiosk at Bishop International Airport in partnership with the Airport Authority Board.



Photos of example Sloan Museum exhibit, Genesee County Automation Alley highway sign, and statue at Bishop International Airport's baggage claim area.

APPENDIX

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Visual Guide for Example Memorial Features

Visual Guide to West Boulevard Park Existing Conditions

Inspirational Historical Photographs and St. John Calendar Pages

Charrette Facilitators Guide

St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial Planning Community Visioning Facilitation Guide 11/6/2021

Agenda:

2:00-2:20 pm - Welcome everyone at the door, and invite everyone to sign in, create a name tag & enjoy refreshments

2:20-2:35 pm - Mr. Wardlow:

- Welcome!
- Grounding in Prayer
- Housekeeping - mention calendar, where the restrooms are
- Explain context - City's sale of the St. John Center property spurred the Historical Committee to think of a memorial bigger than a historical plaque. The group is now planning and advocating for a full-sized memorial throughout West Boulevard Park.
- Historical committee is advocating for the key features of the neighborhood memorial to include a historical plaque like the one at Chevy Commons, a large pavilion, and a memorial walking path with features like historical signs (images with captions and/or a paragraph of information), benches and statues.
- Goal for today's session is to paint a community vision for what the mural will look like. Come to our future St. John Street Historical Committee meetings to stay part of the conversation while feedback from today will be shaped into a written plan.

2:35-2:55 - Mona

- When you think of a memorial that honors your neighborhood, how would you describe the style/feel of it? (e.g. elegant, modern, creative, etc.)
- Here's how we're going to make magic happen today: combination of small group work to create your vision at your table (using pens, markers, dots, post-it notes, inspiration from history, photos of the park, and example signs/river overlook/statues) and then we'll come back together for room-wide discussion to share your ideas stare to form a collective vision for how to honor St. John Street neighborhood through the memorial. Please recommend features that the City can actually maintain over time.
- Review timeline.
 - Thursday, November 11th, 4 pm at Berston Field House - review compiled community feedback from this event
 - November 22nd - review draft plan
 - December 9th - review near final plan
 - December 16th - Present plan to Mayor Neeley
- Whole group: Let's see what's on your table!
- Tables: Pick your volunteer facilitator (draw in all voices) and volunteer notetaker (detailed notes).
- Now you have one hour for the fun part! Remember we're here if you need any help.

2:55 pm - 3:55 pm Table group time

3:50 - Mona to give everyone a 5-minute reminder to write down last thoughts.

3:50-4:50 Build a collective list of memorial features and details

4:50-5:00 pm Recap next steps. Thank everyone for sharing creative ideas & lifting their voices - great job!

Charrette Facilitators Guide continued

Afternoon Wrap-Up:

- Great job, team!
- Take photos of sign in sheets
- Clip together maps and notes for by table
- Take down tables & chairs

Morning Preparation:

- Pick up catering
- Set up tables & chairs - 22 round w/6 seats each, 2 long tables
- Set up rounds with maps/inspiring pages and pens/markers
- Set up long tables for: 1) sign in sheets/name tags/PPE/hand sanitizer/mask/sanitizing wipes; 2) refreshments and food signs (use name tag stickers for the food signs)
- Set up AV
- Set up flip chart easel, paper and markers
- Set/Test up slides
- Test microphone
- Josh - event photographer

Packing list of items to bring:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Materials for tables<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Large-format map of the site● Photos of the park and others for inspiration● Pens and markers● Post-it notes & sticky dots to write on● Blank sheets of paper● Heavy duty paper clips□ Materials to keep everyone safe<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Face masks - adult and kid sizes● Hand sanitizer● Sanitizing wipes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Food stuff<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Individual bottles of water and juice● Sandwiches, chips and cookies● Tongs for picking up cookies● Plates● Napkins□ Equipment for facilitation<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Name tags● Sign-in sheet● Easel, easel paper, and large marker● Laptop and laptop charger● Back up AV: projector, projector screen
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Charrette Table Discussion Guide

Table Facilitator Guide

St. John Street Historical Committee's vision for basic elements of the memorial include:

- Historical plaque like the one at Chevy Commons
 - A large pavilion (e.g. 60' x 40')
 - Memorial walking path with features like historical signs (images with captions and/or a paragraph of information), benches (e.g. could have benches be dedicated to a street in the St. John neighborhood)
 - Statues
 - A playground
 - A large mural dedicated to the St. John Street neighborhood, to cover up the graffiti on the I-475 retaining wall on West. Boulevard Dr. near Leith Street.
-

Questions for the Table Facilitator to ask:

1) What would each of these pieces of the memorial look like? Please be as detailed as possible about your vision. For example:

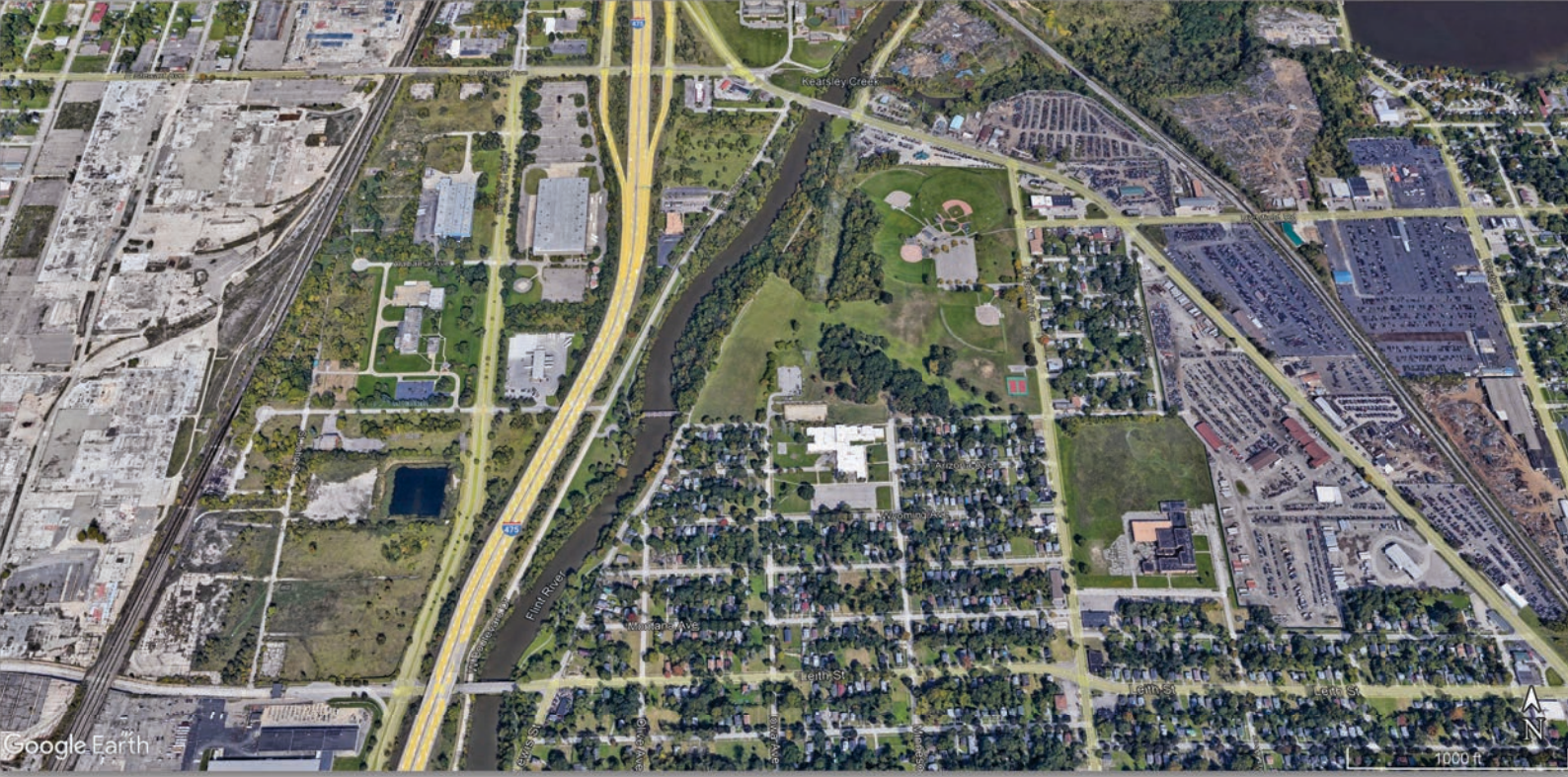
- What themes would be covered by all of the memorial pieces? (Use the calendar pages for inspiration! Civic life/leaders, businesses/business leaders, schools, educational leaders, athletes, etc.)
- What would the signs teach people?
- Who would be featured as statues?
- How many signs, statues and benches would be installed throughout the park?
- What kind of theme or image would you recommend for the mural?

2) Where would you recommend placing these elements within West Boulevard Park? Please use the dots/post-its to design the memorial on your map with others at your table.

3) Do you have other ideas for the memorial features or ways to activate the park space (within reason - features that can be maintained and are financially feasible)? If so, please describe what they are and where would you put them?

Think of your whole experience in the park. For example, the Historical Committee is in favor of renovated docks for accessing the river and making the Utah Bridge an attractive way to reach Whaley Park and riverwatch. (The City looks forward to replacing the unsalvageable, crumbling dam with a walking bridge).

Aerial Map of West Boulevard Park (Printed as Large-Format Poster for Charrette Activities)



Visual Guide for Example Memorial Features

Example Statues



Example Historical Plaque and "Interpretive" Signage

"Interpretive signage is signage that helps to **create a narrative** that acts to generate a positive user experience." (Source: <https://www.travelwayfinding.com/what-is-heritage-interpretation/>)

They tell and/or show a story and bring history to life!



Mural Opportunity - I-475 Retaining Wall:



Sign with River Overlook:



Visual Guide to West Boulevard Park Existing Conditions

West Boulevard Park - North
(Flint River Trail → memorial walking path)



West Boulevard Park - South (open space for pavilion & memorial walking path)



West Boulevard Park - West (along W. Boulevard Dr., parking lot entrance)



West Boulevard Park - East (the river view along Flint River Trail)



Utah Bridge:



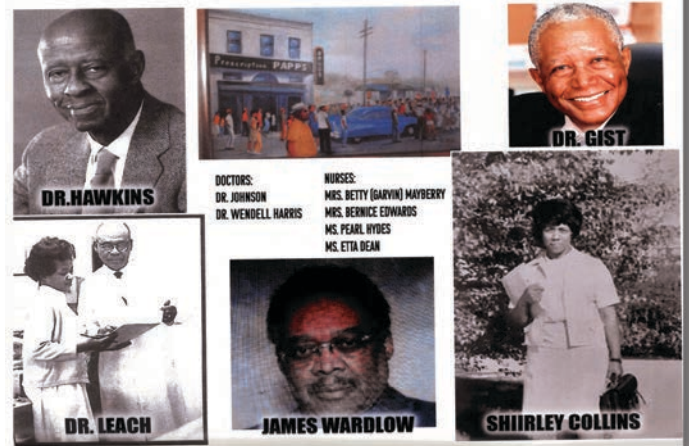
Example Inspirational Historical Photographs of St. John Street Neighborhood

Note: Many of the other historical photographs provided by the St. John Street Historical Committee and used for inspiration during the charrette are woven throughout this St. John Street Neighborhood Memorial Plan.

St. John St Center- Activities & Events



Medical Community



Educational Leaders



Elks Marching Band & Drill Teams



Greater Flint Afro-American Hall of Fame Inductees



Greater Flint Afro-American Hall of Fame Inductees (Cont'd)

