

ABSTRACT

Title of Document:

A COMMUNITY OF OPPORTUNITY:
FROM HOMELESSNESS TO SMALL
BUSINESS OWNERSHIP IN THE NATION'S
CAPITAL

Katherine Solether, Master of Architecture, 2009

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Washington, D.C. has one of the highest levels of chronic homelessness in the country and this population is on the rise. The broad infrastructure of homeless aid programs frequently fails to reintegrate formerly homeless individuals back into the workforce due to their unstable and often criminal backgrounds. By combining microenterprise support, retail space, and mixed-income housing, this project seeks to educate and empower formerly homeless individuals by providing entrepreneurial opportunity, a positive social network of people with similar circumstances and goals, and integration into a broad community of mixed incomes and backgrounds. By nurturing individuals, families, and small businesses, this facility will become an asset to its surrounding Southwest D.C. community and to many of the city's homeless.

A COMMUNITY OF OPPORTUNITY:
FROM HOMELESSNESS TO SMALL BUSINESS OWNERSHIP IN THE
NATION'S CAPITAL

By

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University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
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Chapter 1: Homelessness, a growing problem for D.C.

Homeless Populations

Chronically Homeless:

Unaccompanied individuals with a disabling condition who are homeless for one year.

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Fig. 1a Definition of Chronically Homeless.

According to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, chronic homelessness occurs when an individual has a disabling condition and is without a place to live for more than a twelve-month period¹. The term “disabling condition” is used loosely and can be, but is not limited to, mental illness, substance abuse, physical disability, or any other condition that limits a person’s ability to find or keep employment and/or housing. This study will focus primarily on chronic homeless, as it is a persistent problem regardless of temporal fluctuation in the economy or natural disasters that often only affect people for a finite period.

¹ "Chronic Homelessness - Homeless Assistance - CPD - HUD." Homes and Communities - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). 29 Feb. 2009 <<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/chronic.cfm>>.

Causes and Perpetuation of Homelessness

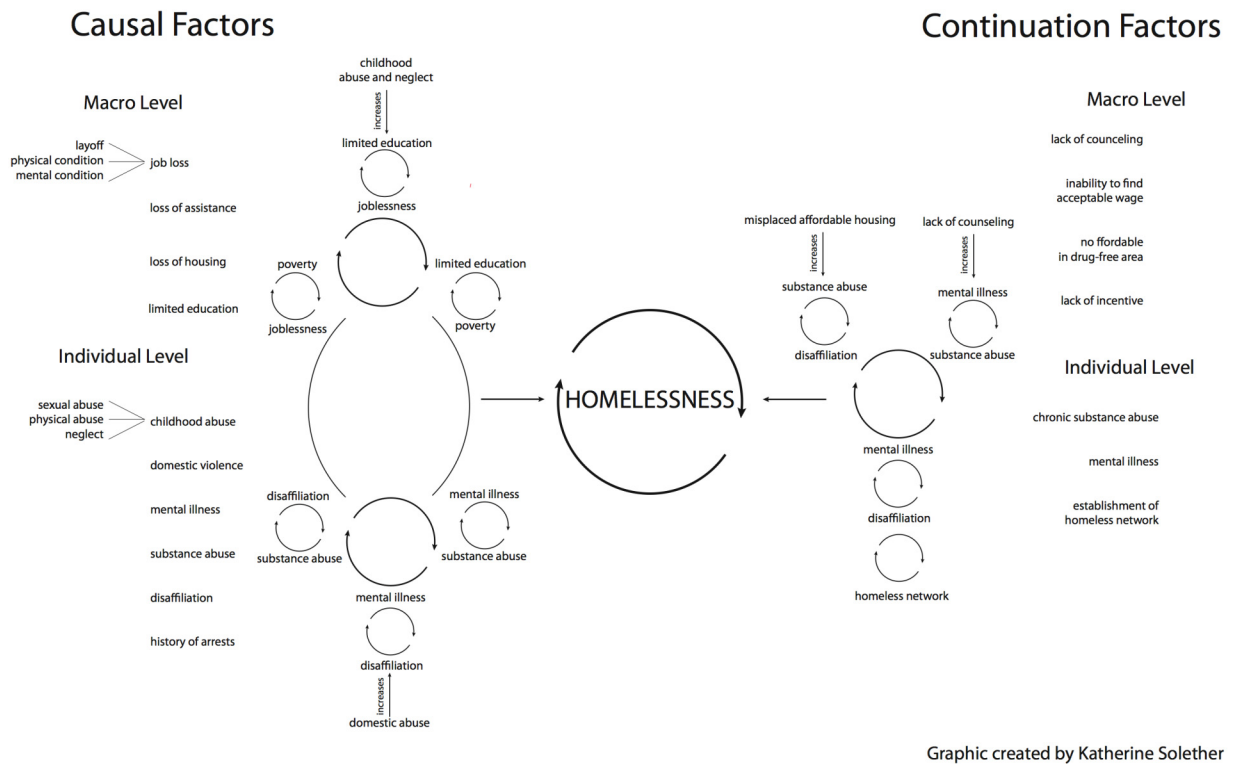


Fig. 1b Cause and Continuation Factors in homeless cycles

Homelessness is an immensely complicated subject. No single factor can be named as the sole cause or explanation for chronic homelessness. It is an intricate matrix of negative cycles at both a macro, or societal, level and at the individual level². On the causal side, factors include childhood and adulthood abuse or neglect, and loss of support systems such as employment, public assistance, or housing. Sometimes abuse can lead to mental illness or an insufficient education due to a lack of stability in a child's home life.

² Morrel-Bellai, Tammy, and Paula N. Goering. "Becoming and Remaining Homeless, A Qualitative Investigation." *Issues in Mental Health Nursing* (2000).

Poor education results in greater difficulty finding employment. Mental illness can both precede and elicit substance abuse. In almost all cases, the aforementioned events or circumstances lead to a degree of disaffiliation or separation from a network of family or friends and ultimately a physical removal to the streets.

On the continuation side of homelessness, similar cycles between mental illness and substance abuse exist. Additionally, the state of being homeless often reduces self-esteem and can result in sense of complacency, or worse depression. In a study on the chronically homeless in Toronto, it was found that 30% of homeless became depressed after becoming homeless and 30% showed signs of depression prior to becoming homeless. Societal factors like a lack of consistent counseling and the fact that most affordable housing is only in areas where drug problems are the worst generates a further spiral. When an individual becomes homeless, he or she often enters into a network of other homeless people. These individuals support each other socially but usually exacerbate each other's substance abuse and complacency conditions by creating a culture of addiction and apathy. The longer a person is homeless, the more difficult it is for him or her to leave. In order to bring individuals out of homelessness, it is critical to break each of the multiple cycles. No single factor causes homelessness; therefore, no single solution can alleviate it.

The State of Homelessness in the District of Columbia

US Cities Homeless Populations
2005

	Population	# Homeless	% Families	% Chronic	% Population
DC Washington (City)	553,523	5,518	31%	32%	1.0%
Los Angeles (County)	9,937,739	91,000	24%	42%	0.9%
New York (City)	8,104,079	48,155	59%	14%	0.6%
Baltimore (City)	636,251	2,904	28%	14%	0.5%
Houston (County)	3,644,285	12,005	64%	30%	0.3%
Chicago (City)	2,862,244	6,715	40%	23%	0.2%

Graphic information provided by Institute for the Study of Homelessness and Poverty

Fig. 1c U.S. Cities Homeless Population Comparison

As shown in figure 1c, the city of Washington D.C. has a very high percentage of homelessness despite its relatively small population, and of D.C.'s homeless population, a relatively high number are chronically homeless. A number of factors contribute to the District's high volume of homelessness. According to Community Partnership, Washington, D.C. has the fourth highest poverty rate in the country, and the income inequality rate for the District is higher than any other U.S. city³. Affordable housing is also of great concern in the city, as indicated by information from 2007 that between 1998 and 2006, the market rate of a two-bedroom apartment increased by 51%.

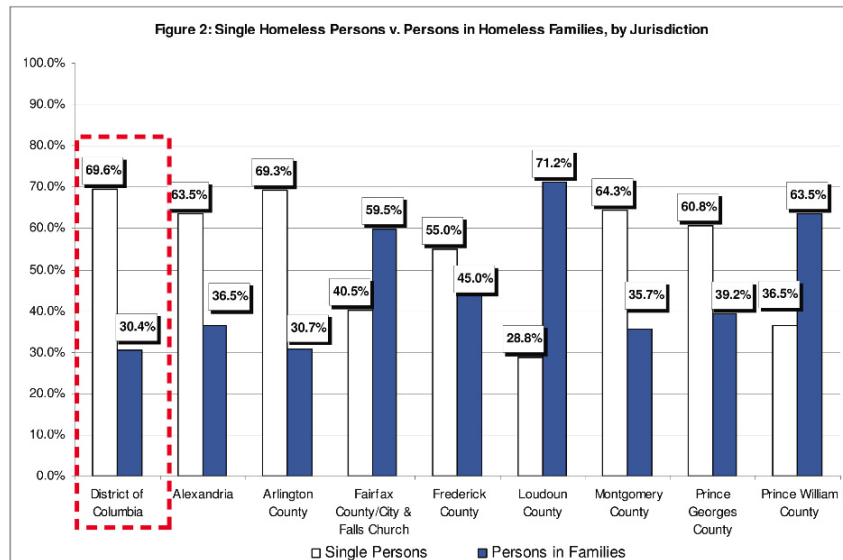
³ Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness 2007 Report to the Community. Washington, D.C.: Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness, 2007.

Table 4: Chronically Homeless								
Jurisdiction	Chronically Homeless Counted as Unsheltered	Chronically Homeless Counted in Emergency and Winter Shelters	Total Chronically Homeless 2008	% Chronic of All Single Homeless Adults	% Chronic of All Literally Homeless Persons	Total Chronically Homeless 2005	Total Chronically Homeless 2006	Total Chronically Homeless 2007
District of Columbia	344	1,840	2,184	52%	36%	1,773	1,891	1,760
Alexandria	46	29	75	34%	22%	91	76	114
Arlington County	129	27	156	55%	38%	100	182	220
Fairfax County/City/Falls Church	176	226	402	54%	22%	258	401	335
Frederick County	13	42	55	33%	18%	77	39	23
Loudoun County	13	8	21	43%	12%	23	16	52
Montgomery County	89	119	208	28%	18%	144	206	231
Prince Georges County	145	71	216	38%	23%	194	239	264
Prince William County	41	17	58	29%	11%	34	27	64
All COG CoCs	996	2,379	3,375	47%	29%	2,694	3,077	3,063

www.communitypartners.org

Fig. 1d Chronically Homeless Statistics for D.C.

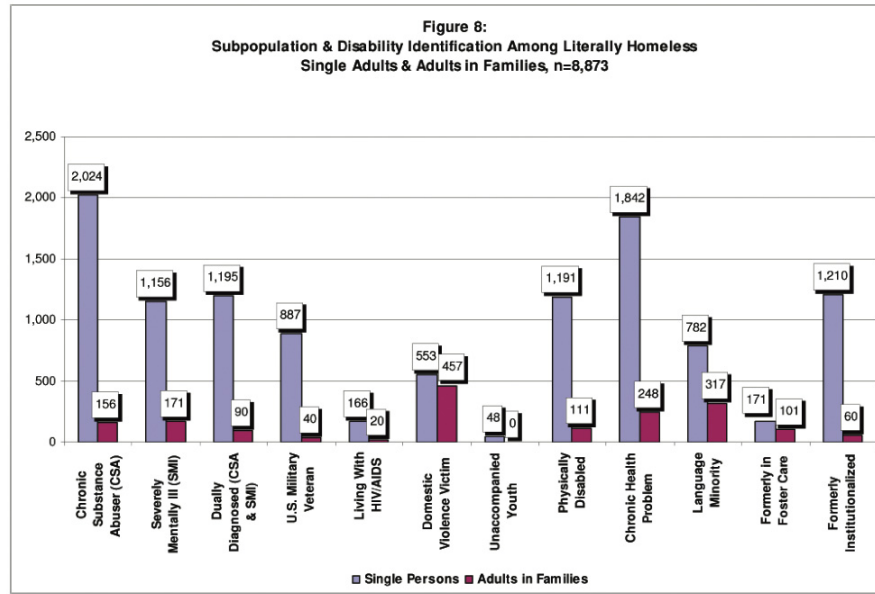
As evidenced by the above table, D.C. has a high percentage of chronically homeless in relationship to its surrounding counties. The table also shows a continual rise in chronic homelessness from 1,773 in 2005 to 2,184 in 2008.



www.communitypartners.org

Fig. 1e Single Persons Versus Families in D.C.

Nearly 70% of the chronically homeless in Washington, D.C. are single individuals, which demonstrates that the problem occurs most frequently among particular individuals rather than among poor nuclear families..

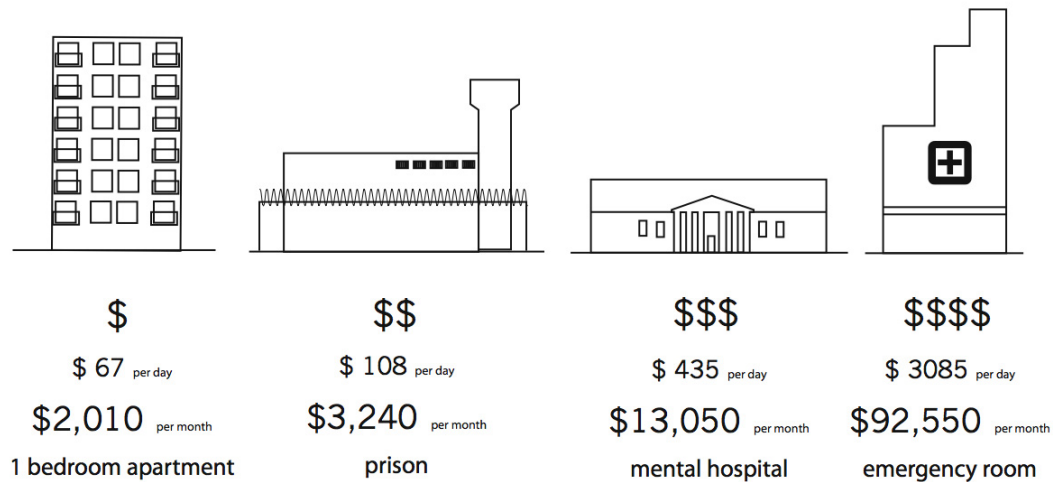


www.communitypartners.org

Fig. 1f Subpopulations of D.C. Homeless

Within D.C.'s homeless population, various subpopulations and their specific needs rise to prominence. The largest subpopulations include chronic substance abusers, those with chronic health problems, the formerly institutionalized, the physically disabled, and those who are both substance abusers and the severely mentally ill. These populations have the greatest quantitative need for assistance.

Homeless Housing Cost Comparison



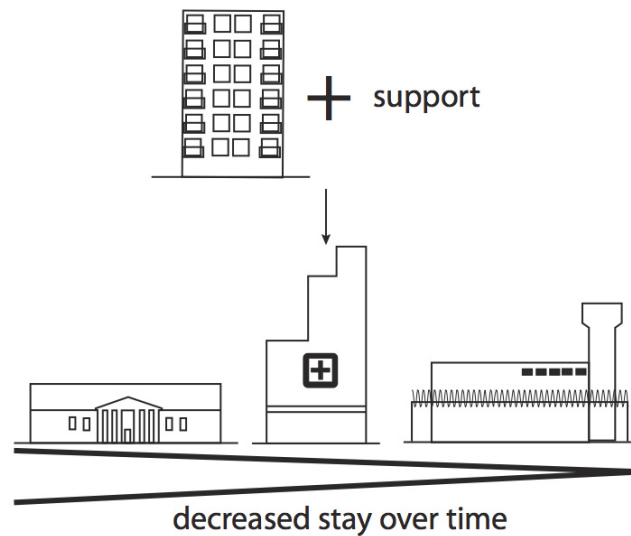
graphic information provided by www.washingtonpost.com
Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 1g Homeless Housing Cost Comparison

Because of low-level criminal activity, as well as mental and physical health problems, homeless people frequently end up in prisons, mental hospitals, or emergency rooms. Shelters are frequently hostile environments and in order to avoid them and still be provided a warm bed, homeless persons will hop from one hospital to the next by feigning or exaggerating a physical condition. This creates a tremendous burden on the health care system and, ultimately, the taxpayers. The cost of placing homeless

individuals in one-bedroom apartments is significantly less per month than trying to meet their needs in prison, at a mental institution, or in the emergency room.⁴

"Homeless people placed in supportive housing experience marked reduction in shelter use, hospitalizations (regardless of type), length of stay per hospitalization and time incarcerated." -University of Pennsylvania Study



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

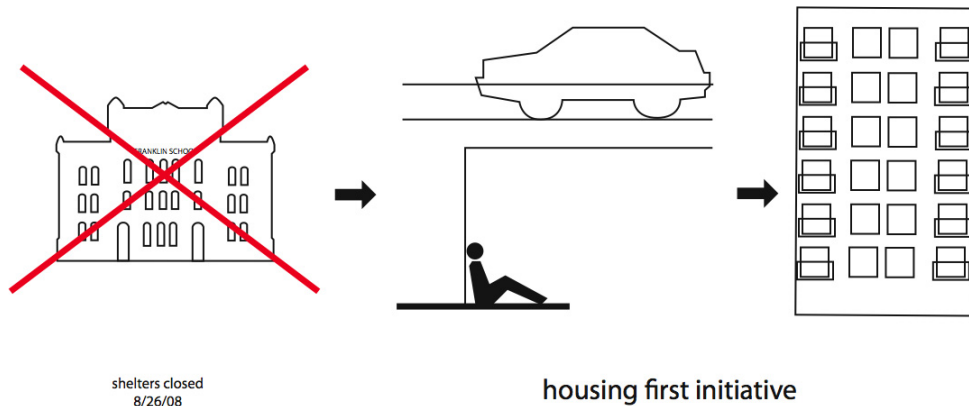
Fig. 1h Benefits of Supported Transitional Housing

Housing with supportive services such as counseling, medical assistance, and case management has been shown to significantly reduce an individual's likelihood to appear in a mental institution, hospital, or prison. Should an individual utilizing supportive services be placed in any of the previously mentioned institutions, the length of stay is likely to be much shorter than if the person had not received any supportive services.⁵

⁴ Marc Fisher. "Homes for the Homeless, Bargains for Everyone. " The Washington Post [Washington, D.C.] 20 Nov. 2008,B.1. Washington Post. ProQuest. University of Maryland Libraries, College Park, Maryland. 13 Feb. 2009 <http://www.proquest.com/>

⁵ Davis, Sam. Designing for the Homeless Architecture That Works. Berkeley, California: University of California P, 2004.

Washington DC's Housing First Initiative



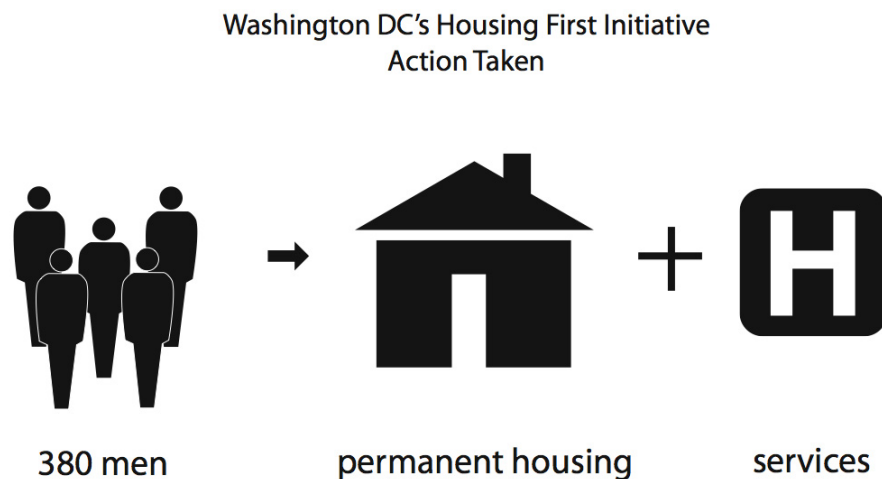
Graphic information provided by www.washingtonpost.com
Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 1i D.C.'s Housing First Initiative

As a part of the mayor's "Homeless No More" campaign and the city's "Housing First Initiative," Washington, D.C. is gradually closing downtown homeless shelters in favor of placing homeless individuals in supported apartments⁶. There has been a great deal of controversy over this gesture, as it appears that the city is attempting to sweep fringe populations into the outskirts of the city by bussing them to suburban shelters. However, the city's new model is attempting to sink greater funds into placing homeless

⁶ "Housing the Homeless; The District goes against tradition, for the better. " The Washington Post [Washington, D.C.] 20 Oct. 2008,A.14. Washington Post. ProQuest. University of Maryland Libraries, College Park, Maryland. 13 Feb. 2009 <http://www.proquest.com/>

into permanent supported housing, taking the attitude that shelter stay should be minimized.



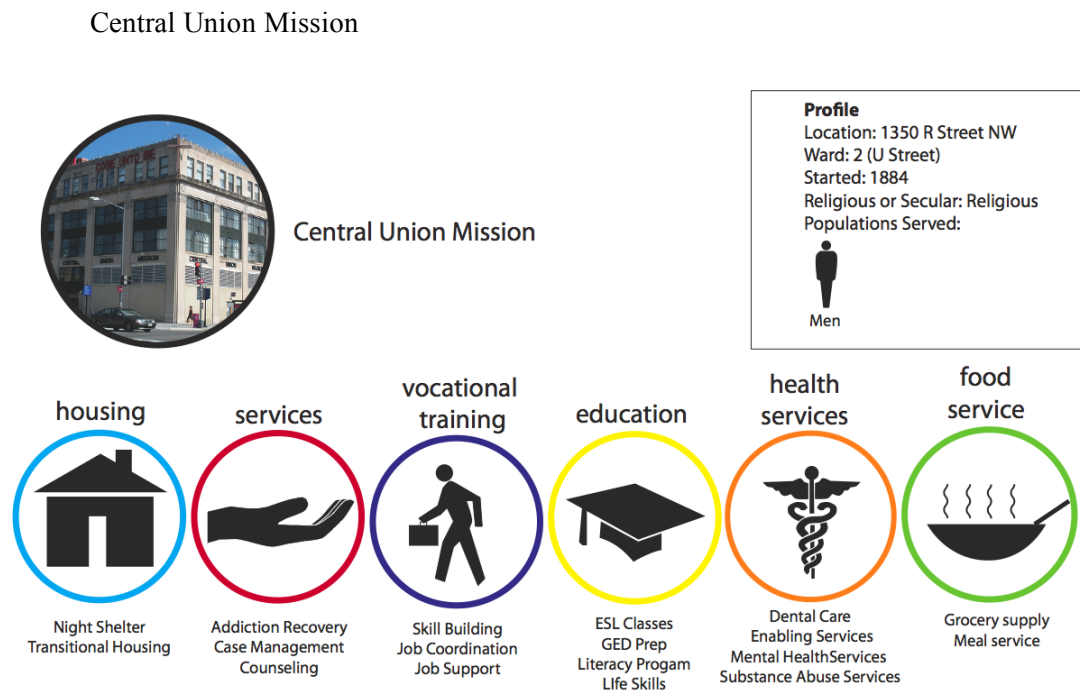
Graphic information provided by www.washingtonpost.com
Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 1j Housing First Initiative Action

The Housing First system begins initial crisis intervention. A homeless individual is assisted in finding and obtaining permanent housing. After the individual is placed, he or she is given home-based case management to help stabilize the individual's disabling condition or conditions. Additional financial assistance is given to help with costs associated with the move. This system is based on a highly successful program in New York City known as "Pathways to Housing."

Chapter 2: Successes of Transitional Housing and other Homeless Aid Programs

Successful Local Transitional Housing



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 2a Central Union Mission Profile

Central Union Mission is a non-denominational Christian organization that has been sheltering and aiding the homeless since 1884. Its primary housing services include a night shelter for 95 men and a transitional housing program for up to 50 men. Physical

needs are met for all guests through the offering of three daily meals, as well as dental, mental health, and substance abuse services. All guests are offered addiction recovery services and case management. For those who may not be overnight guests or in the transitional housing program, Central Union Mission provides a variety of general education programs, job skill building, grocery and meal supply as well as community events such as the annual school supply giveaway to surrounding neighborhood children.

Central Union Mission is a noteworthy example of a homeless facility because of its wide range of services. The Mission does not simply serve the men it houses; it accommodates the needs of other underserved populations such as families, single women, and those who may not be homeless but need assistance by being a classroom, dining room, and living room to the surrounding community.



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 2b Central Union Mission R Street Panorama

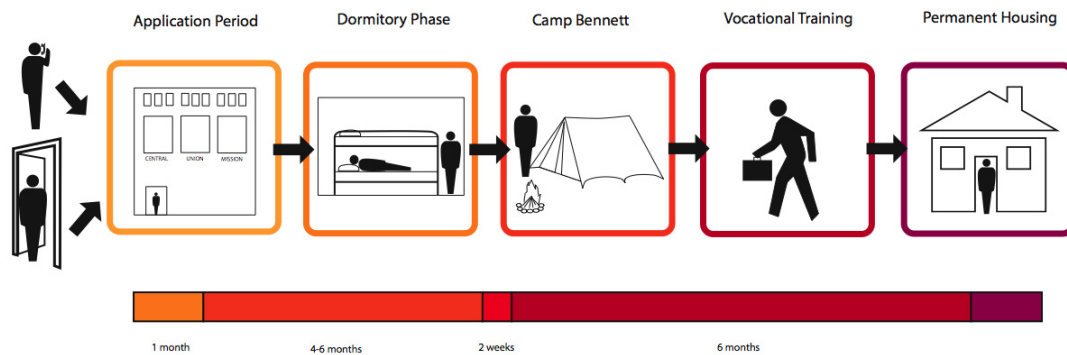
Central Union Mission is intelligently placed at the intersection of heavily commercial 15th Street NW and heavily residential R Street NW. Across 15th Street are a number of small-scale retail buildings including a small grocery. Subsidized housing and housing office is located west of the Mission on R Street.



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 2c Central Union Mission 14th Street Panorama

The Mission is also across R Street from a medical clinic and more retail. These amenities as well as those shown in figure 2b provide an excellent urban support system for the Mission’s clients and programs.



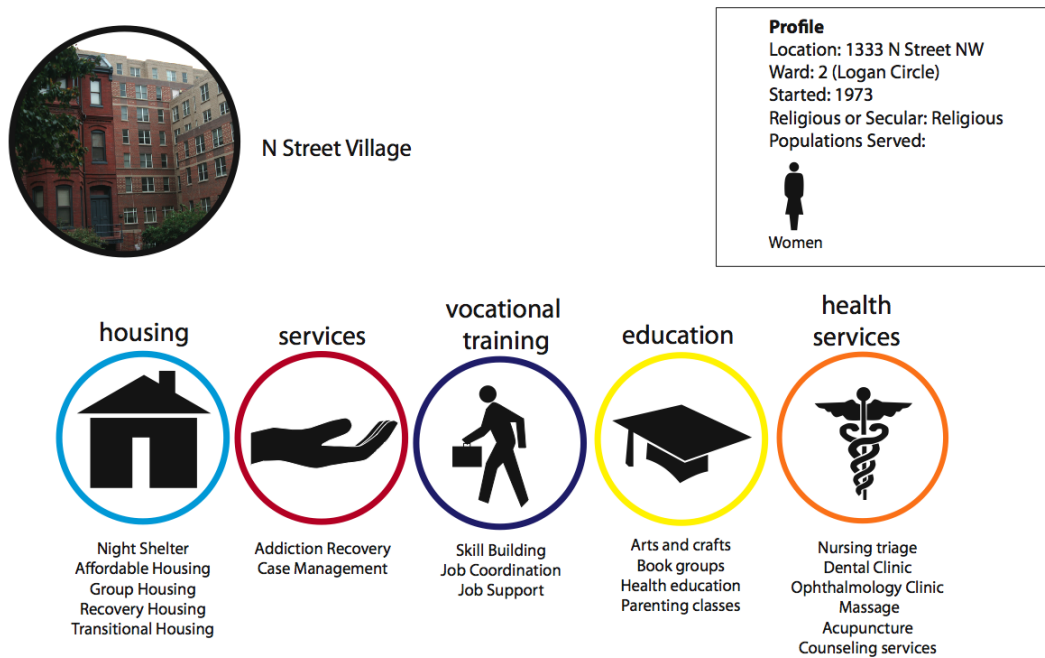
Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 2d Central Union Mission Transitional Housing Phases

The transitional housing program at the Mission, known as the “Spiritual Transformation Program” begins when an overnight guest expresses interest or when a family member or friend calls and refers his or her loved one. The application period requires that the program candidate prove a level of commitment by remaining at the Mission for an entire month, sleeping in the overnight guest quarters. During this month,

candidates must acquire proper identification papers and a tuberculosis vaccination. The candidate is required to attend Sunday services in the Chapel of the Mission, as well as perform certain maintenance and food preparation chores around the facility. The candidate is restricted to the premises in order to begin to break habits of addiction that the individual may have. During the dormitory phase, the individual moves into a dormitory style room with one to two roommates at the mission and is provided with case management and counseling services. The individual is regularly drug tested and continues to gain food service prep and janitorial skills by performing chores for the Mission. After 4-6 months, the individual is sent on a retreat with a group of others in the dormitory phase and returns to begin the job training and placement process. After a period of around one year and once the individual has found employment, he graduates from the program and is assisted in finding permanent housing outside the Mission.

N Street Village



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

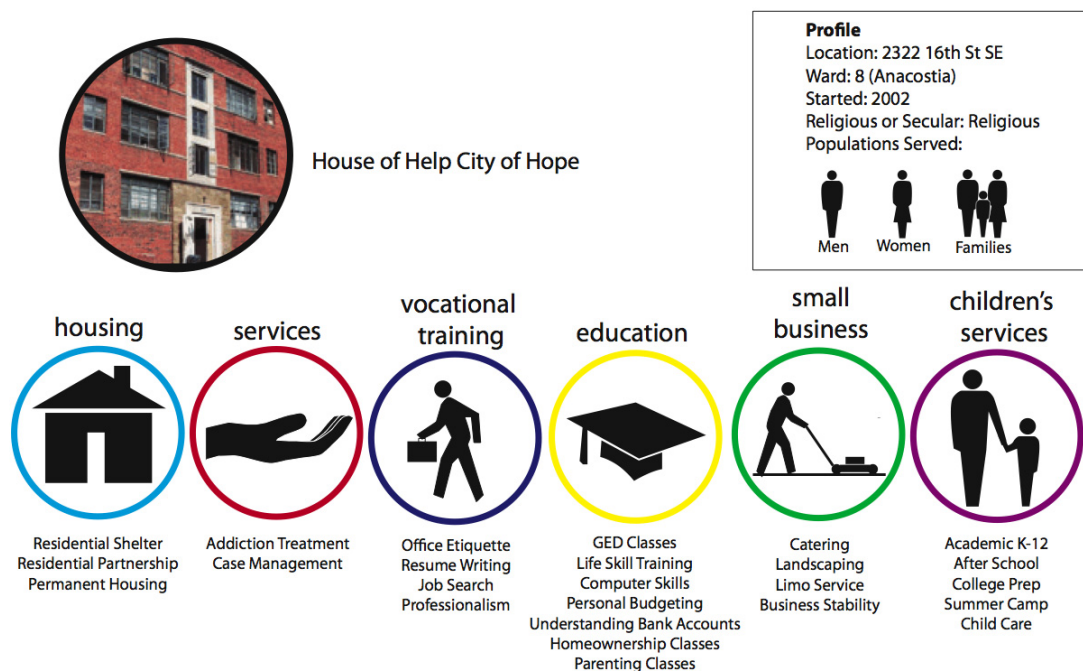
Fig. 2e N Street Village Profile

N Street Village began in the 1970s as a women's night shelter as an extension of Luther Place Memorial Church. It has since evolved its programs into a broad array of housing, services and training to meet the needs of the often-underserved female homeless population of Washington. The Village is privately operated but mainly secular in practice. Faith education and church service attendance are purely optional. Housing programs include the night shelter, transitional housing at varying levels of assistance, and supportive affordable housing. Educational and therapeutic programs such as arts and crafts, book groups, and exercise and wellness classes such as yoga facilitate addiction recovery and case management. Health services extend beyond medical and dental services to include ophthalmological aid and alternative medical

services including acupuncture and massage therapy. Practical educational programs include vocational training and support and parenting classes.

N Street Village has a very high rate of success and has been heralded for its creative approach to assisting the homeless. The village is constantly adding to its list of classes and programs. Unique and flexible education and assistance makes the facility more than helpful. It adds a level of enjoyment and fulfillment to the recovery process. Also, as a privately funded organization, the Village is able to be stricter with clients than federally funded programs, adding to its success rates.

House of Help City of Hope



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 2f House of Help City of Hope Profile

House of Help City of Hope is also a faith-based organization begun in the late 1990s, with an emphasis on placing both families and individuals into transitional and permanent supportive housing. Its buildings are located in Southeast D.C., where the most underserved portion of D.C.'s homeless populations is located. Since the target populations include children, educational programs reach beyond job training and adult education to include academic tutorials and recreational programs for kids as a way of boosting community and preventing homelessness. Another way that House of Help distinguishes itself from other aid programs is that those who enter transitional housing are offered assistance in beginning and maintaining small business ventures. By fostering entrepreneurship, individuals gain a heightened confidence and self-sufficiency that is greater than in normal employment placement.

Program Comparison

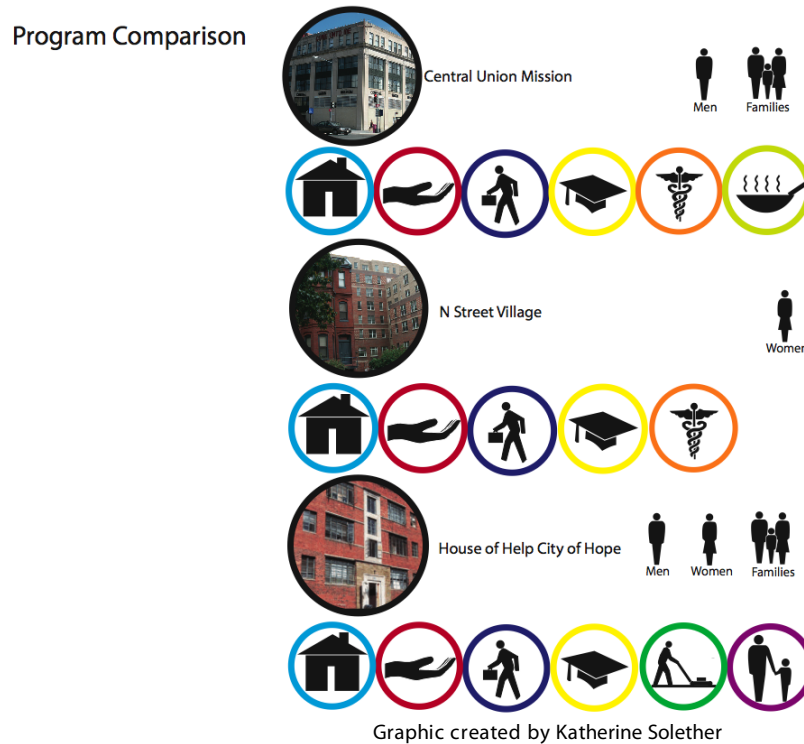


Fig. 2g Organizational Profile Comparison

Each of the three organizations examined target different homeless populations. All of the above were begun and maintained by Christian institutions, although N Street Village has been mostly secularized in comparison to Central Union Mission and House of Help City of Hope. Though their programs are not identical, each represent a model of varied types of housing plus supportive services, and each facility has been highly successful in aiding and rehabilitating its targeted homeless populations.

Chapter 3: The Case for Microenterprise

Defining Microenterprise

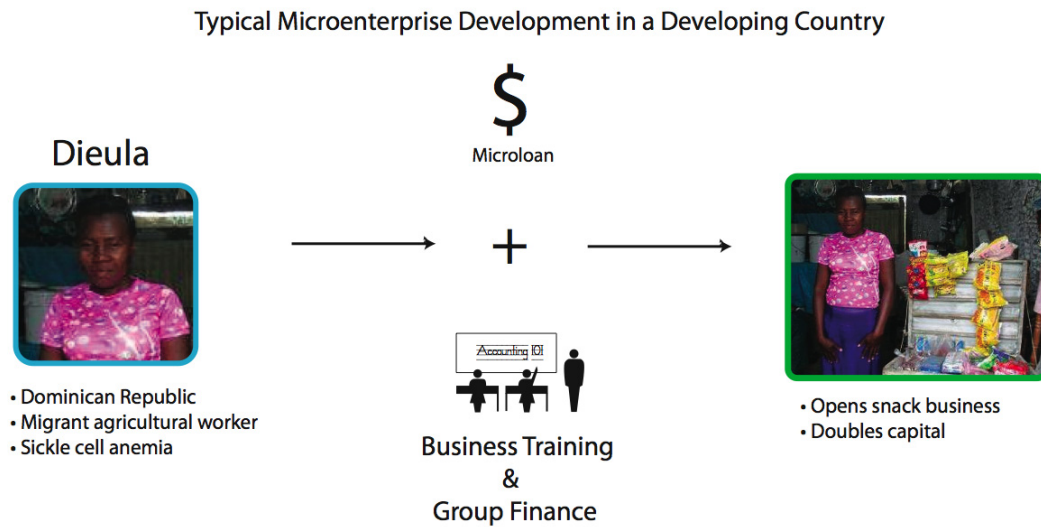
Microenterprise is defined by the Association of Enterprise Opportunity as “a business with five or fewer employees, small enough to require initial capital of \$35,000 or less; the average microloan is about \$7000.”⁷

The Benefits of Microenterprise

Microenterprise, frequently in conjunction with microfinance, has been a highly successful means of empowering and improving the lives of impoverished communities all over the globe and particularly in developing countries. Most microenterprise organizations require little more than loans and a relationship to the served community to be effective at jumpstarting the businesses of motivated but financially and educationally disadvantaged individuals. These organizations give loans primarily to women since they are generally the least likely to have the education or capital to start an enterprise. Women are also effective at creating community support and are able to utilize group-

⁷ "About Microenterprise." Association For Enterprise Opportunity. The Association For Enterprise Opportunity. 25 Apr. 2009 <<http://www.microenterpriseworks.org>>.

lending systems that add a greater measure of accountability and assistance.



Graphic created by Katherine Solether
Photo provided by www.grameenfoundation.org

Fig. 3a Example of Microenterprise in a Developing Country

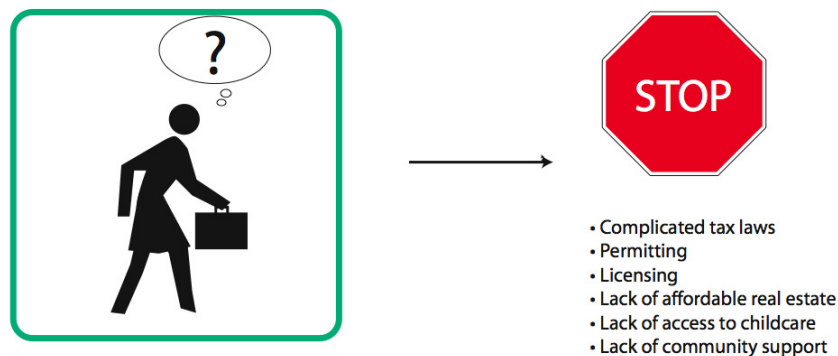
Figure 3a illustrates how microenterprise typically functions in developing countries. A poor woman with limited education working as a manual laborer is given a small loan and some business training. She opens a successful snack business and is able to double her capital.

Microenterprise holds immense potential in assisting women who have transitioned or are transitioning out of homelessness. Frequently unstable prior employment or criminal backgrounds prevent formerly homeless from attaining jobs after they have been off the streets. Self-employment through supported microenterprise offers income opportunity as well as the tremendous confidence gained by working independently. Small-scale businesses also add character and connectedness to communities by offering more personalized services than national chains. This

connection to a neighborhood is also beneficial to a formerly homeless woman who needs to reestablish community after leaving the negative influence of the homeless network.

Programmatic Implications of Microenterprise

Challenges to Microenterprise in the U.S.



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 3a Challenges to Microenterprise in the United States

Implementing Third World models of microenterprise assistance in the US poses a different set of challenges, but it offers equally exciting possibilities of raising people out of poverty and homelessness cycles. Agencies that facilitate microenterprise frequently assist small scale entrepreneurs by offering microlending and small business support services such as licensing, bookkeeping training, accountability groups, and continuing educational support. The most significant difference between microenterprise in the US and that of the Third World is the amount of bureaucracy and regulations over

which an entrepreneur must gain mastery. The most common types of microenterprises run by women in the US are food service, child care, and beauty salons, all of which require licensure, inspections, and permits.⁸ Understanding taxes and bookkeeping is also vitally necessary in America and is not critical in developing countries.

Creating architecture that fosters both transitional housing and microenterprise support involves careful programmatic structure. The architecture must facilitate supportive housing, training facilities, and a space to open for business. In addition to program elements standard for homeless transitional housing such as single room occupancy and dorm-style housing, food service, recreational and classroom space, and offices for counseling and administration, a microenterprise assistance organization will require daycare facilities, additional classroom space, and space for occupants' commercial activity or administration.

Daycare facilities will be necessary for those women who have children with them or have regained custody after homelessness recovery. Additional classroom space will be used for training beyond resume writing. This classroom space could be used as a laboratory for training in cosmetology, food service, medical training, or other education necessary for gaining small business licensure. Perhaps some of these spaces would be focused on specific types of training like cosmetology, or they could be flexible for the shifting entrepreneurial interests of the formerly homeless clients. Accounting and bookkeeping classes would be a requirement for the program. The laboratory could combine needs by using the food service preparation training to feed residents of the

⁸ Schreiner, Mark, and Jonathan Morduch. Replicating Microfinance in the United States: Opportunities and Challenges. Thesis. University of Washington St. Louis, 2001. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 2001.

transitional housing facility. Clients who have made it through training and licensure would be provided with a small retail space and a loan to begin their business. Since there would need to be a number of these retail spaces of similar small scale, perhaps the spaces could become modular or have shared administrative space and signage. Single room occupancy housing could begin to resemble live-work housing where additional office, storage, and workspace is provided so that the occupant could work from their personal space if their small business does not require retail front. The structure of this theoretical organization will need to be defined before final architectural program can be established.

Chapter 4: Site Selection and Analysis

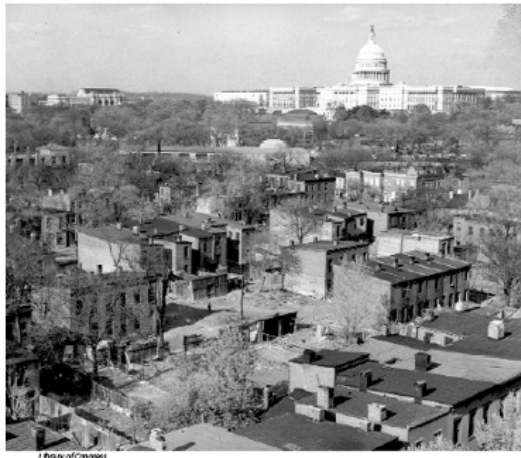


Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4a Southwest D.C. neighborhood boundaries

The area of study for potential building site is bounded by Interstate 395 to the North, South Capitol Street to the east, the Anacostia River to the southeast, and the Potomac River to the west. Interstate 395 is an impervious highway and prevents access northward for most of its length. The primary vehicular access into the area is from South Capitol to the east and Maine Avenue to the west. The secondary roads are M Street and I Street that are directly connected to Maine Ave and run east and west.

Southwest DC Urban Renewal



Before: Decaying Housing



After: Urban Renewal

Images provided by the Library of Congress

Fig. 4b Southwest D.C. before and after urban renewal

Southwest D.C. is one of the oldest and newest neighborhoods in Washington, D.C. Prior to the 1950s the area had become one of the largest and most diverse working class neighborhoods in the city. The population consisted of German and Eastern European immigrants, Jews, and blacks. As early as the 1920s, concerns were raised about the prevalence of decaying slum housing in the area. Philanthropic developers like Sternberg and Kober as well as the Alley Housing Authority attempted to improve the state of housing by building affordable but comfortable housing at little profit to the developer. Despite these efforts, Southwest became known for crime, gambling, prostitution, disease and extreme poverty. In the 1950s plans were made to virtually level the neighborhood and start from scratch. Southwest became the first example of urban

renewal in the country, a risky experiment for Washington. Whole blocks of row houses and tenement housing were razed in favor of modernist housing blocks on pilotis. The majority of the area's residents were relocated due to the increase in rental costs. This relocation and the loss of 4½ Street, a vibrant commercial corridor for the neighborhood, caused a loss of community.



Southwest Heritage Trail Signage

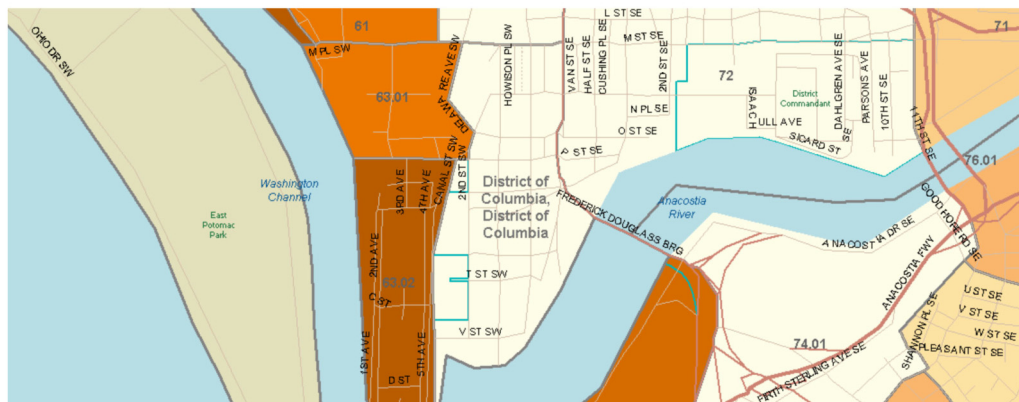
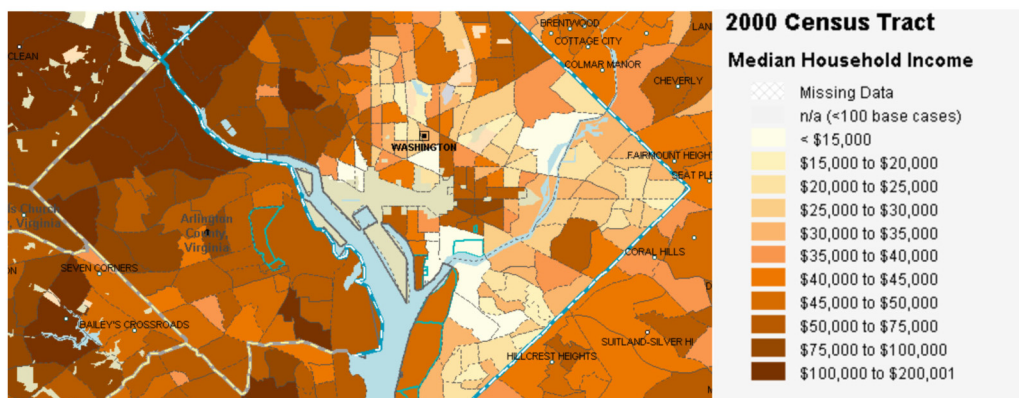
Graphic information provided by Cultural Tourism DC
Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4c Southwest Heritage Trail

During the 1980s and 1990s, Southwest became a forgotten part of the city with crime and poverty on the rise once again. The recent construction of the new Nationals Park Baseball Stadium and other major developments in the area has begun to revitalize this area for the second time. Fortunately, this revitalization plan does not involve intentional relocation of its residents, but a careful balance must be found in order to prevent de facto relocation due to significant property value increases caused by new development. Today, the history of the Southwest is commemorated by a heritage trail where visitors are able to walk the majority of the quadrant and learn about its colorful past.

Demographics of Southwest D.C.

Southwest D.C. has a unique set of demographics that make it appropriately suited for economic development as well as supportive housing. According the 2000 census the median age was 35 to 37 years. Fifteen to twenty percent of the population was over 65. Only 5-10% of the housing is owner occupied leaving 60-75% renter occupied housing units. Since the target population for transitional housing and microenterprise is frequently women, research has been particularly focused on the female populations of Southwest.

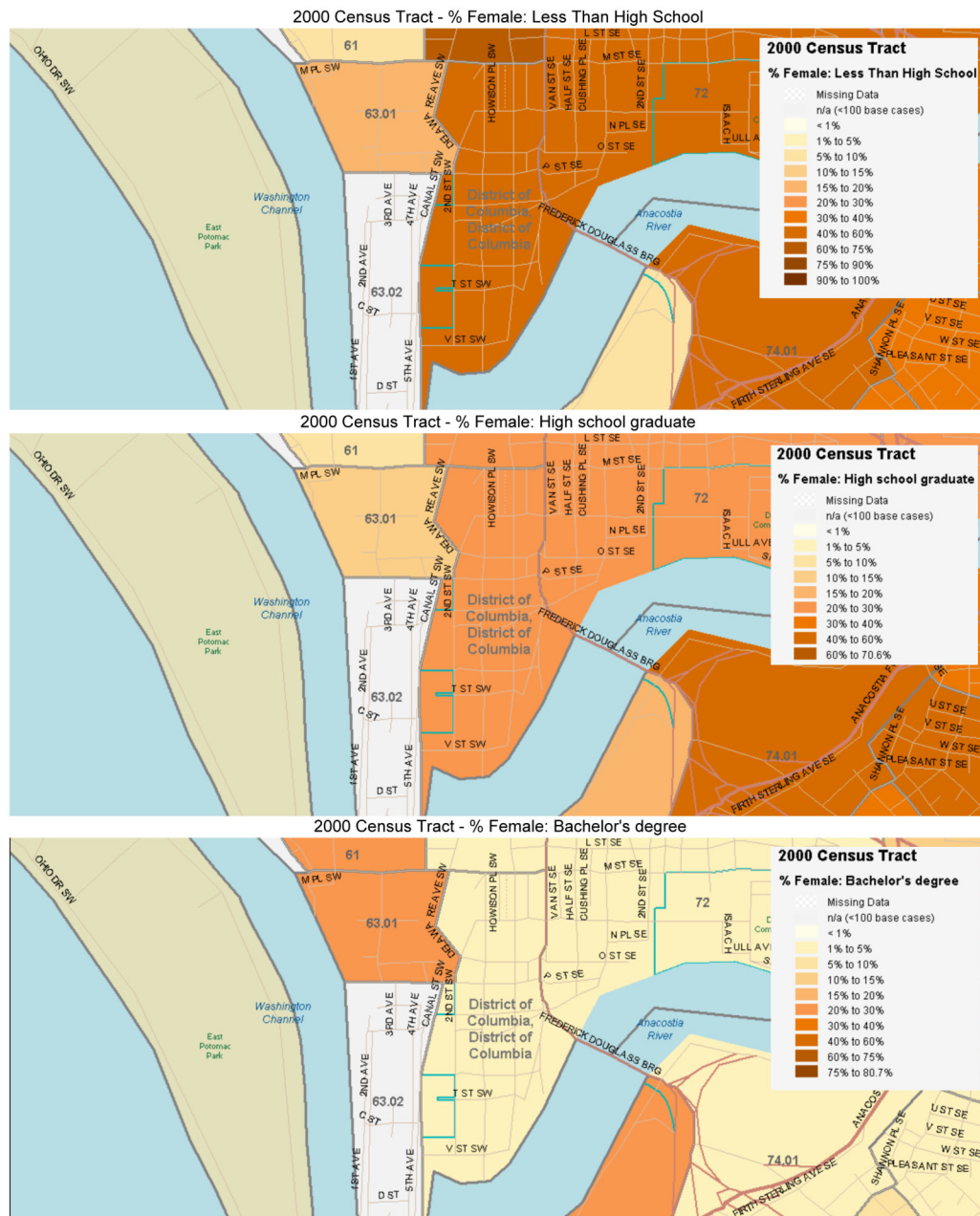


Regional vs. Local Median Household Income

Graphic Provided by
www.socialexplorer.com

Fig. 4d Regional vs. Local Median Income

As shown in Fig. 4d, the median income per household was primarily under \$15,000 dollars per year, placing 42.5% of the population under the poverty line. This income level is very low compared to other parts of D.C., especially to the north and west.



Female Education Levels

Graphic Provided by
www.socialexplorer.com

Fig. 4e Southwest Female Education Levels

From Fig. 4e, it is evident that education levels, particularly for women, are relatively low. 40-60% of women have less than a high school education, while 15-20% have a high school diploma but do not go on to college, and a mere 1-5% have a bachelor's degree. This abysmally low level of education contributes to the extremely low median incomes and high levels of poverty in the neighborhood.

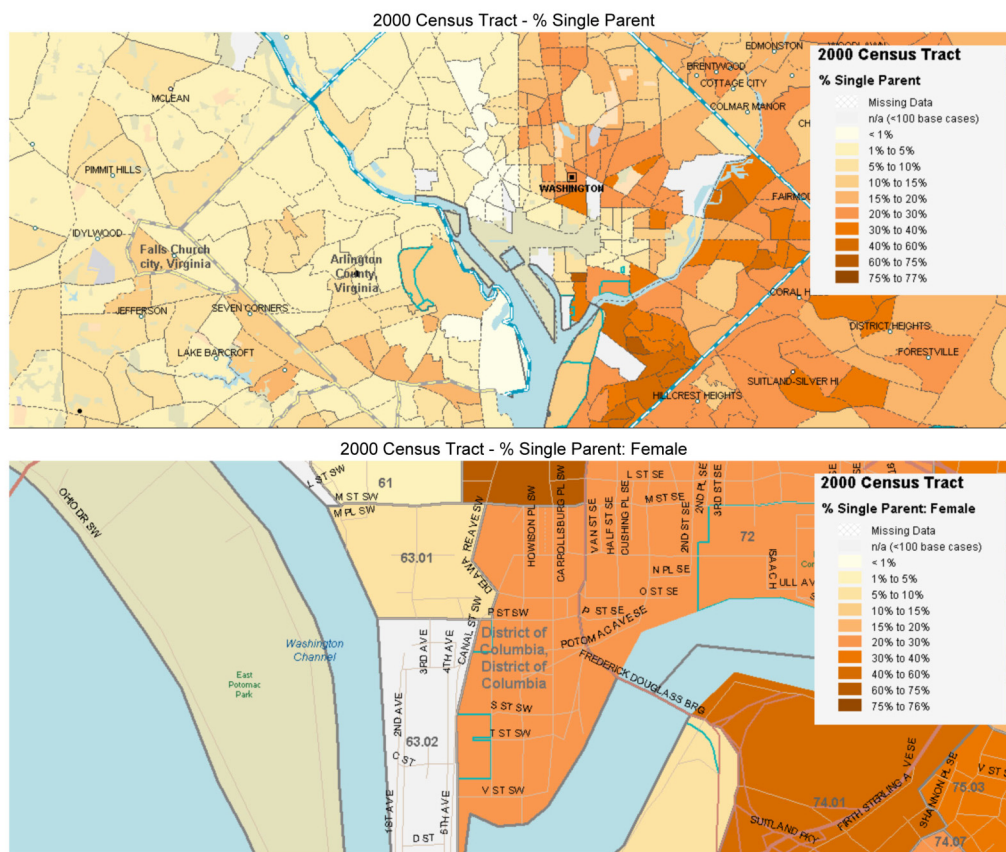


Fig. 4f Regional vs. Local Single Parent Percentage

Southwest also has a concentration of single parents, especially when compared to the rest of DC. The area has 30-40% single parents overall and 20-30% single female parents.

Census data showed that employment distribution for women was 20-30% Office and Admin Support, 15-20% Professional, 15-20% Management Business Finance, 15-20% Building/ Ground Clean/ Maintenance, 5-10% Protective Service, 5-10% Food Preparation/Serving, 1-5% Service Personal Care/Service, 1-5% Sales and Related, and less than 1% Healthcare Support.⁹ It is not immediately evident why office administrative support jobs take up such a large percentage of working women over other employment that does not require an education, such as food service. The low levels of education could also attribute to the low levels of professional employment in the area.

Based on this data, it is clear that poor education levels led to lower income potential and high levels of single parenthood, which have resulted in very low median incomes and a high rate of poverty in Southwest. Since poverty and poor education are part of the cycles that contribute to the causes and continuation of homelessness, a transitional housing facility and microenterprise center would contribute greatly to meeting the needs of this community.

⁹ "2000 Census Demography Maps." Social Explorer. 2005. Social Explorer. 8 Apr. 2009 <<http://www.socialexplorer.com>>.

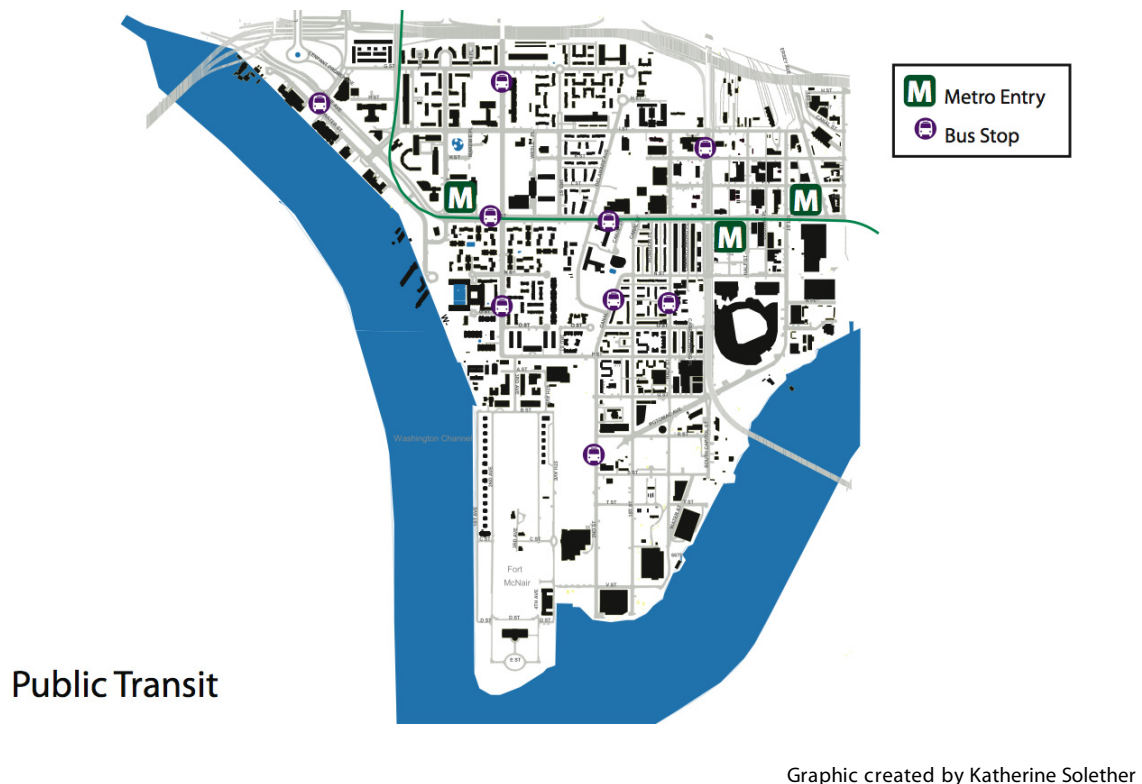
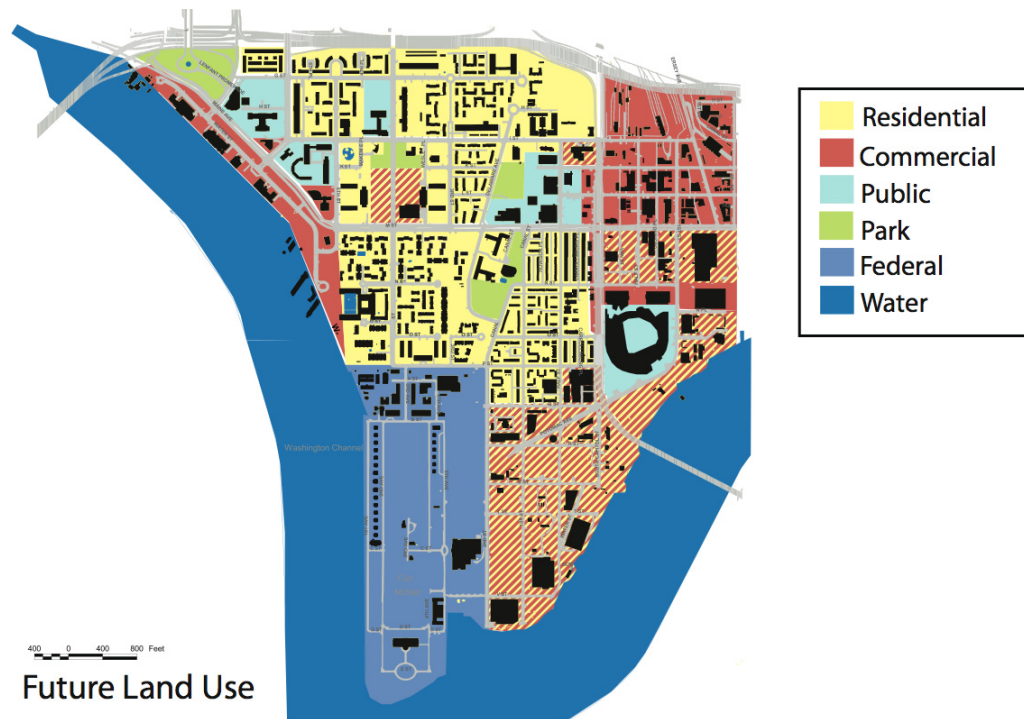


Fig. 4g Public transit over figure ground

There is direct Metro access to the site on the Green Line through the Waterfront stop located at the intersection of 4th Street SW and M Street SW. The entrance to the Waterfront stop is located approximately thirty feet from a Safeway grocery store and former Waterside Mall. The next closest Metro stop is located at Navy Yard. Navy Yard Metro entrances are located along M Street SE, the first at Half Street SE and the second at New Jersey Avenue SE.

City buses access the site on four separate routes. Bus stops are concentrated along primary and secondary roads like Maine Ave., M St., 4th St., and South Capitol with a few additional stops located on residential roads. The high concentration of Metro

and bus stops gives excellent accessibility to Downtown D.C. and other parts of the greater metropolitan area.

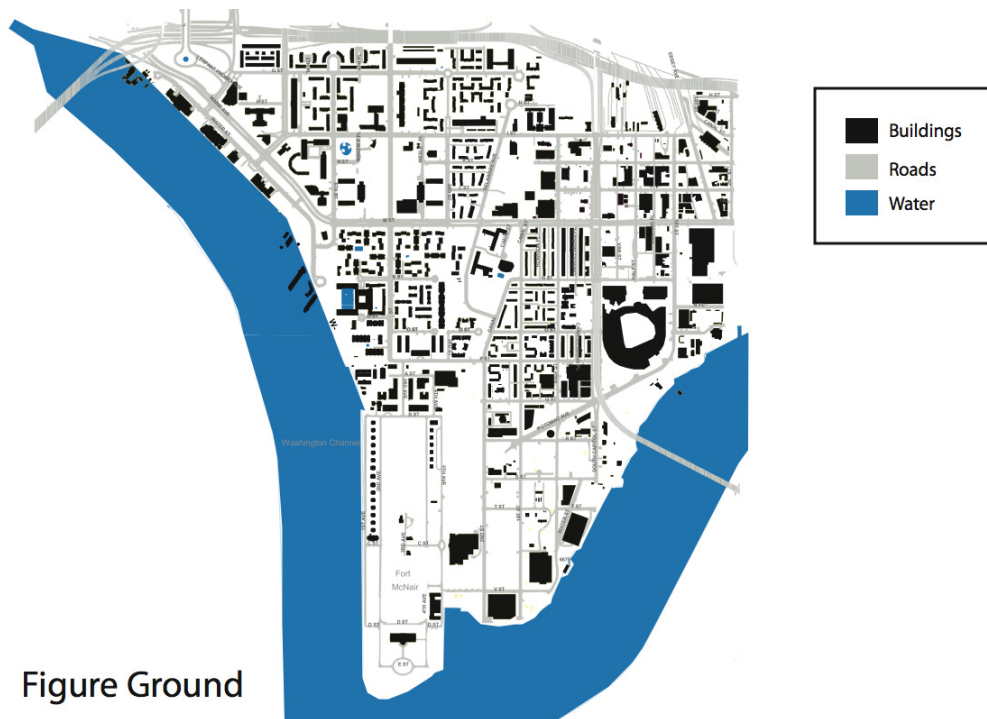


Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4h Southwest future land use map

The area West of South Capitol Street is primarily medium to high-density residential use with a number of D.C. municipal buildings and schools located north of M Street. A handful of parks with sports fields and other leisure amenities are nestled into the residential areas. Fort McNair Military Base occupies the southwest tip of the quadrant and cuts off public access to the waterfront. A concentration of commercial and retail buildings lines the waterfront north of the Fort McNair as well as the areas surrounding the new Nationals Park Baseball Stadium. Though development is proposed and under construction, the only commercial use along M Street west of South Capitol is the Safeway grocery. A significant amount of mixed-use development is shown east of Ft McNair. When completed, this area will connect directly to the stadium

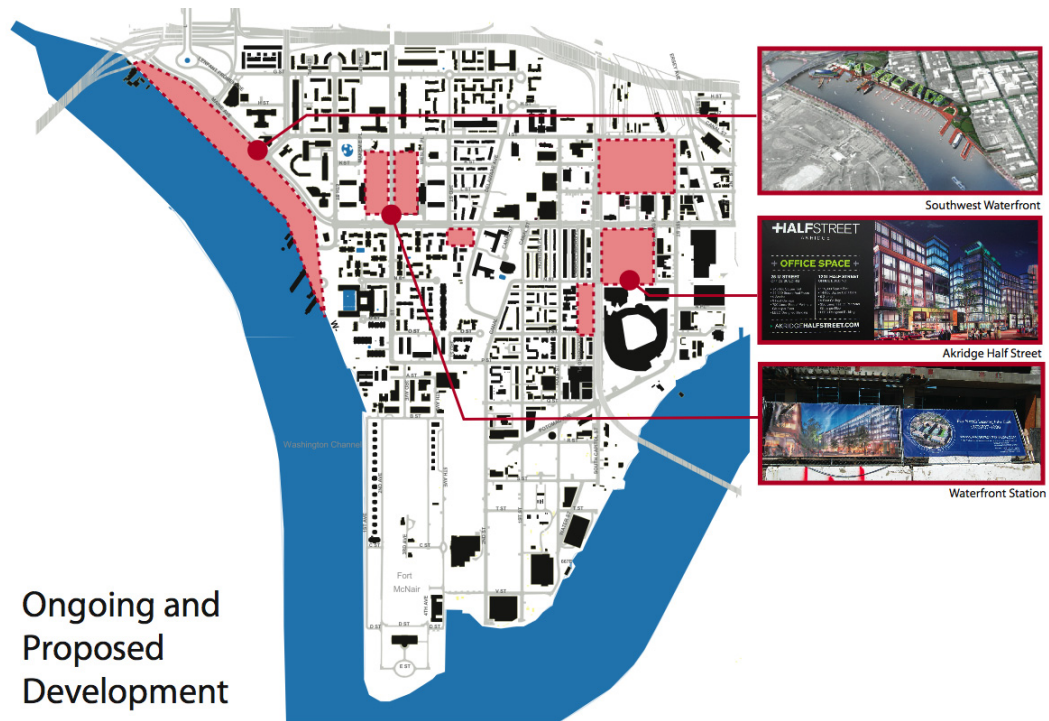
and the Navy Yard mixed-use project that is underway west of the map area shown. This area is currently industrial in use and there is no evidence of imminent development.



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4i Southwest figure ground map

As shown by the ground representation of the buildings, Southwest D.C. has a low density of buildings and a significant amount of parking and dead space between buildings. Much of this is the product of the aforementioned 1960s urban renewal. The majority of the buildings are high-rise residential buildings that sit on pilotis as objects in the landscape with little connection to the street. As a result, Southwest D.C. functions like a medium-density suburb, an anomaly in the District's urban fabric.



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4j Ongoing and proposed development diagram

A number of revitalization projects are currently being developed in Southwest and the western edge of Southeast DC. The three largest are the Southwest Waterfront Project, Waterfront Station at M and 4th Streets SW, and Akridge Half Street project. Each of these projects involves high-density residential, commercial and mixed-use buildings with pedestrian friendly promenades and medium to high-end retail at the ground level.

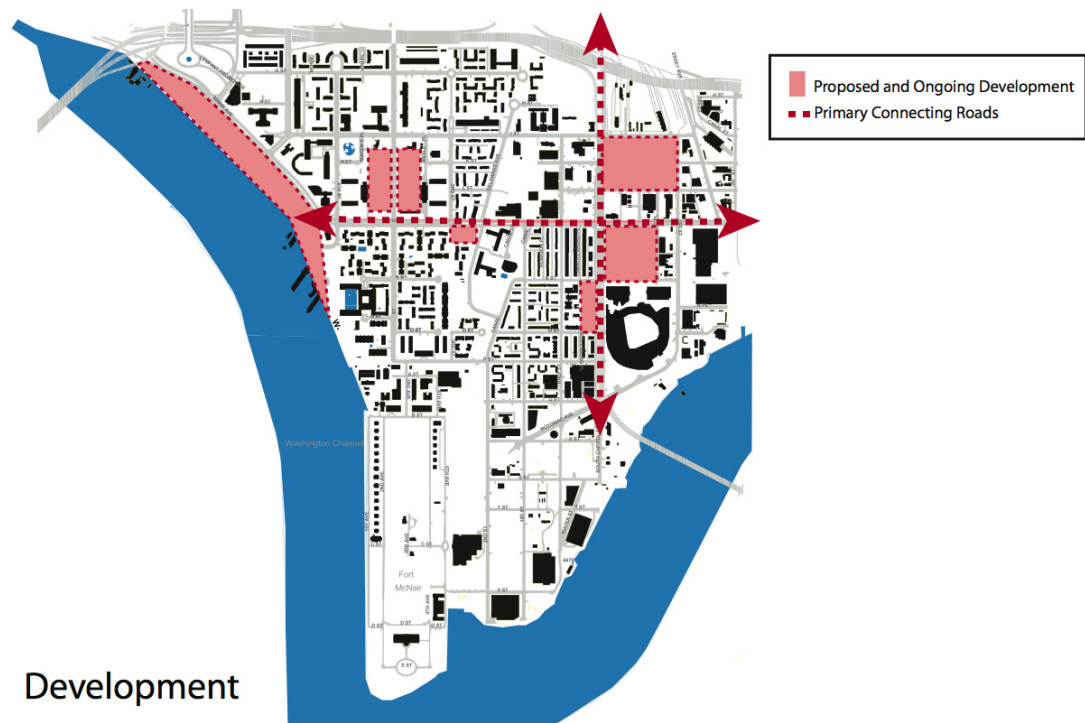
The Southwest Waterfront promises to bring the waterfront back to its former glory at the turn of the century when the water's edge was lined with steamboats and amusement parks. Waterfront Station is replacing the former Waterside Mall that once closed off 4th Street with its sprawling bulk.

Waterfront Station is in its first phase of construction and has reopened 4th Street as a commercial street. Waterfront Station has a particular interest in local commerce and places a high priority on businesses that “directly serve and support the SW neighborhood—in the short term and for generations to come.”¹⁰

Akridge at Half Street seeks to take advantage of the raised level of commercial activity around Nationals Park with LEED targeted Class ‘A’ offices, luxury residential buildings, shopping, restaurants and entertainment venues. The only completed portion of this project is the office building constructed over the entrance to the Navy Yard Metro. This metro entrance is the primary public transit portal for stadium traffic.

The level and types of development on the east side of South Capitol is concerning compared to the virtual stagnation on the west side of the street. High-priced new office and residential buildings have been completed and are under construction at an immense rate and appear to be boosting a homogenous level of affluence that cannot and should not be mimicked in Southwest. Whatever occurs on the eastern boundary of South Capitol should be matched on the western boundary while respecting the needs and income levels of the neighborhoods to the west. The current development appears to be fostering an “other side of the tracks” mentality—that is, dividing the rich from the poor using the physical line of South Capital. If the same type of development occurs on the west side as what is happening on the east, the effects would begin to resemble the urban renewal of the 1960s that flushed many poorer residents out of their homes and damaged the sense of community for the sake of an overhaul of shiny, new buildings.

¹⁰ "Local Business Opportunities." Waterfront Station. Forest City Washington, Vornado/Charles E. Smith, and Bresler & Reiner. 5 Apr. 2009
<<http://www.waterfrontstation.com>>.



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4k Proposed retail corridor diagram

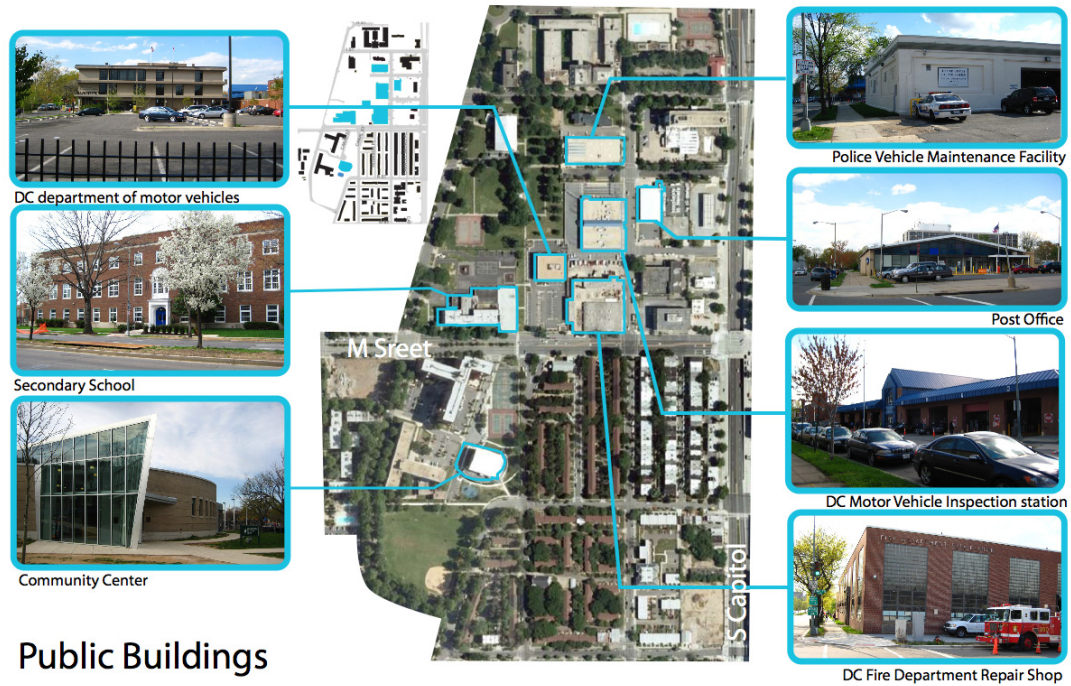


Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4l Smaller area of study for site selection

Southwest D.C., despite its separation from Downtown by Interstate 395, has a limited but not congested vehicular flow to and from other quadrants of the city. The access to public transportation adds another level of connection and fluidity. Strangely, most of the existing and proposed or ongoing development is restricted to pockets along the western waterfront, and east of South Capitol. Since M Street is both the primary road in and out of northern DC as well as the artery between the Southwest Waterfront and the baseball stadium, a commercial and retail corridor is necessary to connect retail activity generated by the waterfront to the retail activity generated by the stadium. Thus far the only development taking advantage of this connection is the Waterside Station currently under construction over the former Waterside Mall.

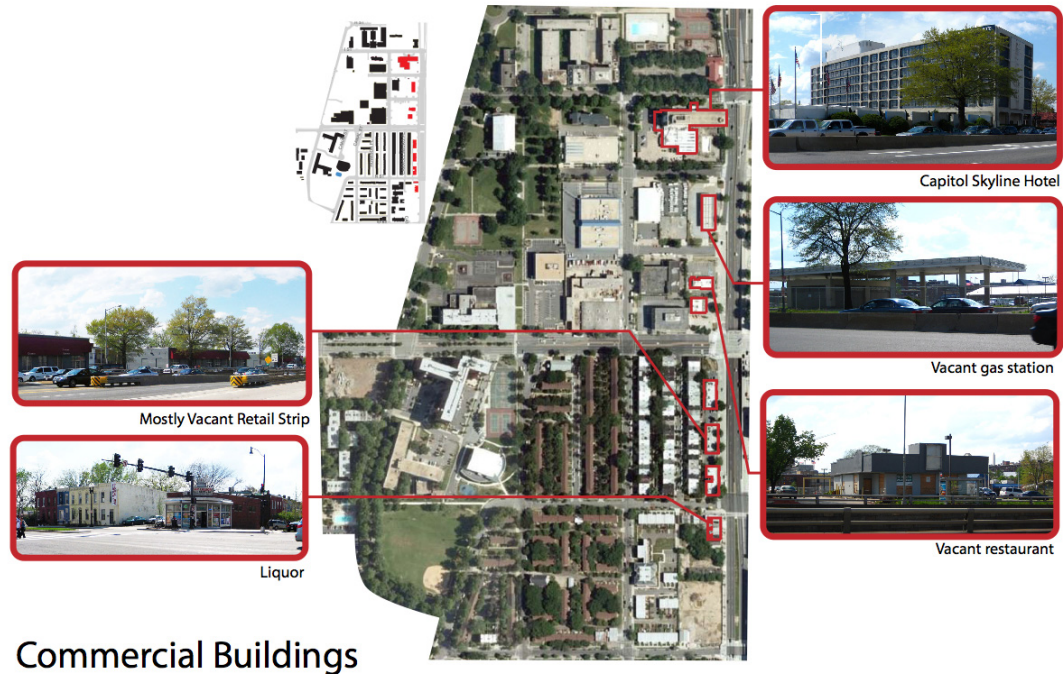
Also, the commercial and retail strip that lines the western edge of South Capitol has a number of dying and vacant commercial properties. The weakness of this commercial edge is perplexing given the area's proximity to the baseball stadium traffic as well as the concentration of adjacent housing. The areas along M Street and South Capitol appear to be ripe with potential for development. An area bounded by 395 to the north, South Capitol to the east, O Street to the South and Delaware Avenue to the west was selected for further consideration of site selection.



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4m Smaller area of study: Public Buildings

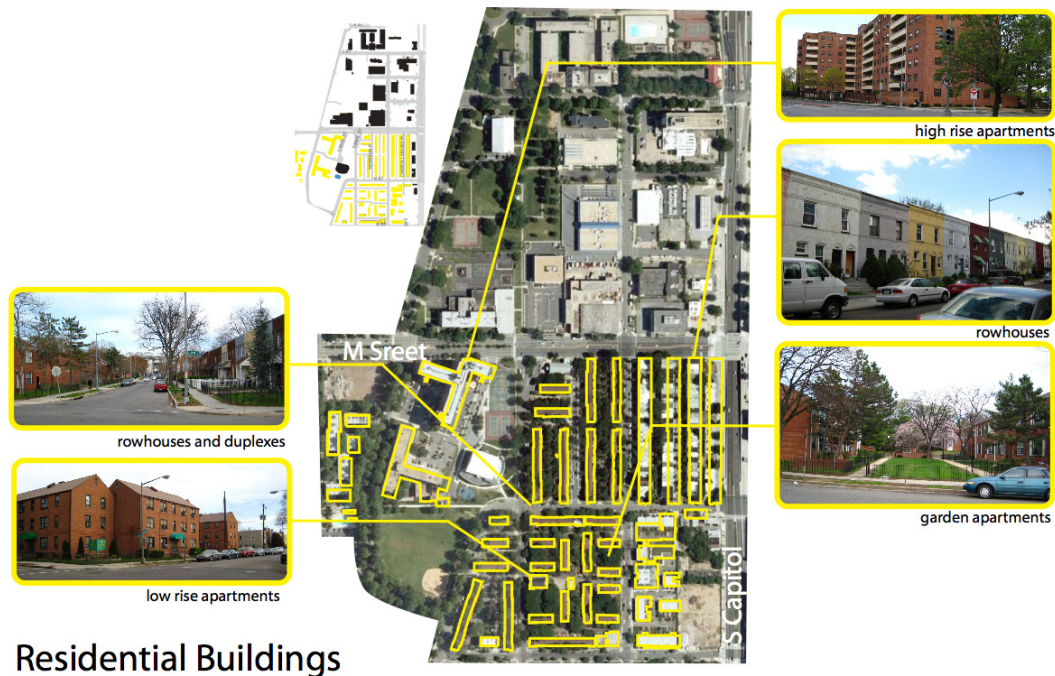
A clustering of DC municipal buildings occurs along Half Street SW and M Street SW. Most of these buildings are related to vehicle maintenance and inspection. Police vehicle maintenance is furthest north followed by D.C. resident motor vehicle inspection, and the Fire Engine Repair Shop fronts M Street. The department of motor vehicles and subsequent parking are directly west of the inspection stations. Each of these buildings receives a high level of traffic during the workweek but is deserted during weekends. More community-oriented buildings such as Bowen Elementary School and King Greenleaf Recreation Center are further west.



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4n Smaller area of study: Commercial Buildings

Along South Capitol there is a skeletal retail edge. Furthest north is the Capital Skyline hotel and restaurant, followed by parking lots, a vacant gas station and vacant restaurant. South of M Street is a retail strip of three identical bleak, gray, CMU buildings that appear mostly vacant. At the corner of N Street and South Capitol is a small liquor store followed by four row houses adapted for commercial use. South of the row houses, a large lot has been cleared for new commercial development.



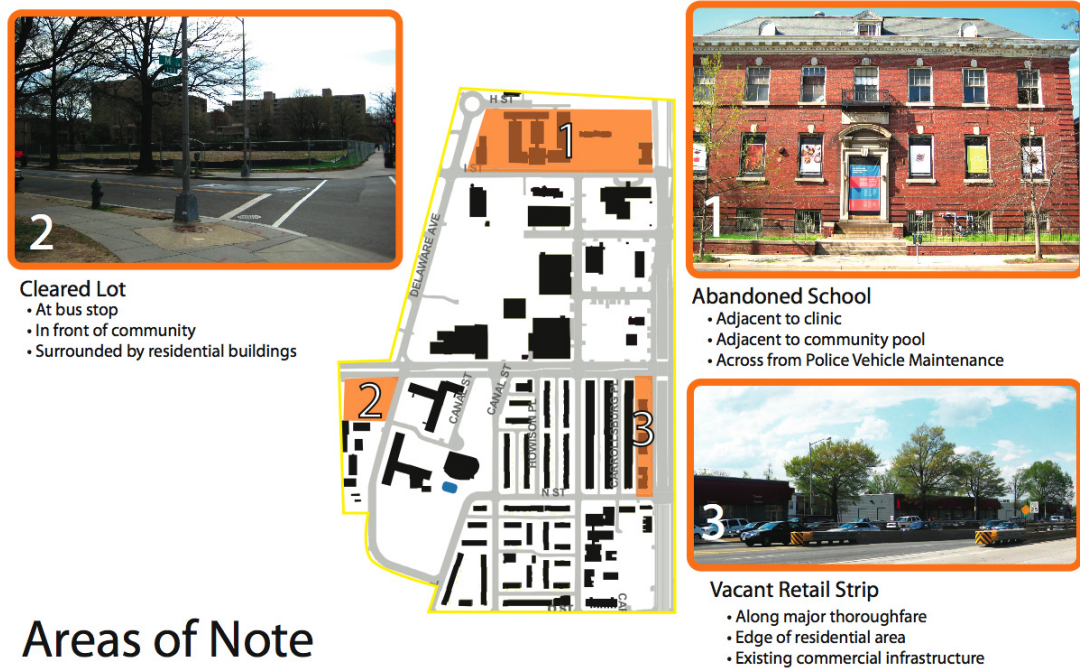
Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4o Smaller area of study: Residential Buildings

There is a sizeable amount of medium-density housing in the form of row housing and garden apartment style housing. The St. James mutual homes, James Creek Dwellings, and Syphax Gardens were some of the city's first efforts at creating affordable, livable housing built by Sternberg and Kober, two charitably-minded developers, as well as the Alley Dwelling authority between 1897 and 1939¹¹. The housing appears to be fully occupied and in good repair. Higher density dwellings were

¹¹ Cultural Tourism DC. River Farms to Urban Towers, Southwest Heritage Trail. Brochure. Washington, D.C.: Author, 2009.

constructed during the 1960s urban renewal.



Graphic created by Katherine Solether

Fig. 4p Three Site Possibilities

There are three areas of particular interest for the development of a transitional housing and microenterprise facility. The first is the area surrounding an abandoned school, formerly Randal Junior High School. The historic building has fallen into tremendous disrepair, but will soon undergo a major transformation. Similar to the Franklin School, the building was used as 170-bed homeless shelter until it was sold in November of 2006 to the Corcoran College of Art and Design.



Fig. 4q Corcoran's Proposed Randall School Project

Plans have been made to develop the center into 100,000 square feet of studio, teaching, and gallery spaces as well as undergraduate housing. The project is to be completed for the fall semester of 2011 and is intended to open the entire Southwest community to the arts. Adjacent to the Randall School is a health care clinic to the west, as well as Randall Recreational Center and daycare center to the east. The area would likely be very secure due to its proximity to the police vehicle maintenance facility across I Street. An empty lot that backs up to a public park is also across the street. Developing this lot as a transitional housing facility would take advantage of both the health care and daycare centers across the street as well as foster a relationship with the burgeoning artist community of the Corcoran. Such a large student population would also boost the economy of the area and become a potential market for microenterprise.

The second area of interest is a recently cleared lot north of the King Greenleaf Recreational Center on M Street. This lot is better incorporated with other Southwest housing, but its location along M Street, the artery between the waterfront and the stadium, could also easily fit in retail or commercial building types necessary for microenterprise.

The third area is the mostly vacant retail strip along South Capitol between M and N Streets. The existing buildings have too meek of an architectural presence to be in keeping with the level of development taking place around the Stadium across South Capitol. These buildings are badly in need of demolition or creative redevelopment. The lot also makes a strong connection to the surrounding residential area by directly backing up to Half Street row housing.

Final Site Selection

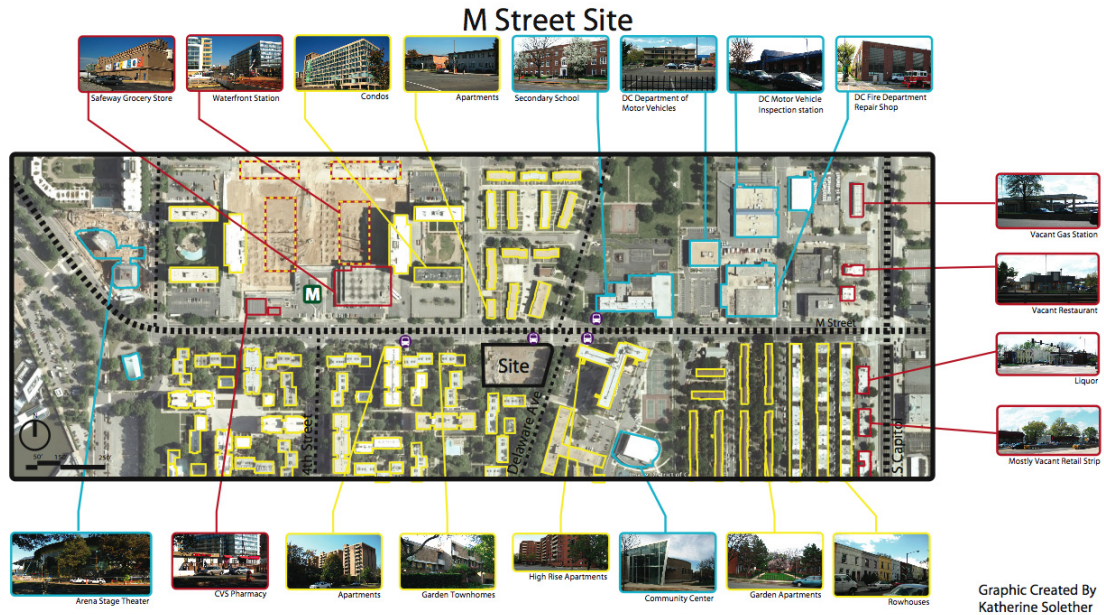


Fig. 4r M Street Site

Of the three areas of note, site number two at the corner of M Street and Delaware Avenue was selected for the building proposal. The site was selected for its adjacency to the new Waterfront Station development and its relationship to surrounding residences. Since M Street is the primary east-west thoroughfare through Southeast and Southwest, the site's street frontage is ripe for mixed-use development.



Fig. 4s Site Context

The site is surrounded by residential buildings on all four sides. North of M Street is a complex of two and three-story subsidized housing buildings. These buildings do not face M Street, but turn their sides to M Street so that clotheslines and back porches have the same view to M street as main entrances. An eight-story residential tower is to the east of the site on Delaware Ave. A complex of garden condominiums is to the South and West of the site. The two-story condominiums have brick-walled backyards facing M Street. None of the site's current adjacent buildings contribute to a healthy urban street character found in other parts of D.C. As pictured in panorama number two, new development is underway to the northwest of the site and a master plan suggests that a new mixed-use building will occupy the parking lot in front of the 1960's housing tower. The building proposal will continue this new trend towards mixed-use buildings in Southwest D.C.

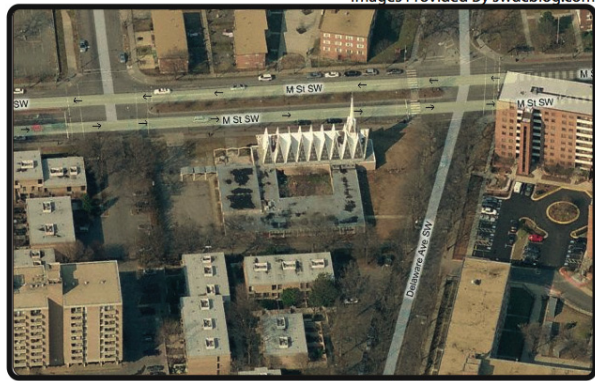
St Matthew's Lutheran Church



Images Provided By swdcblog.com

222 M Street, Southwest

Constructed in 1963
Abandoned in 2005
Demolished in 2008



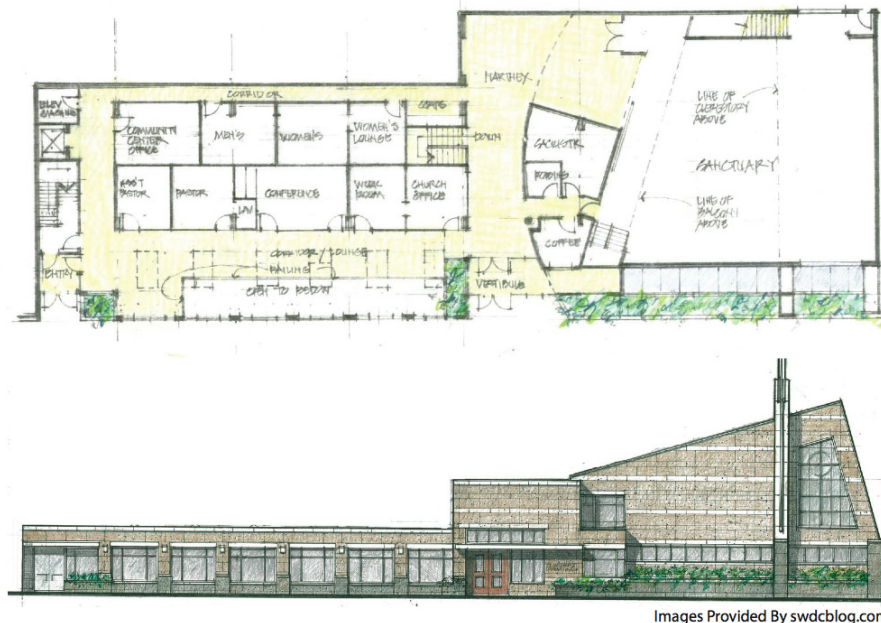
Images Provided By www.bing.com/maps

Fig. 4t St. Matthew's Building on Site

Prior to being cleared, the chosen site was the location of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church. This building was constructed during the period of urban renewal during the late 1950s and early 1960s. The church stood as an architectural icon until 2008 when it was demolished after a three-year period of vacancy due to structural instability. St Matthew's congregation has been meeting in neighboring church buildings and has proposed a new design illustrated in Figure 4u. This new design is much smaller than the original church, thus opening the site to further development. A plan for a Thurgood Marshall Coffee shop is included in the floor plans demonstrating a desire for the church to reach out to the community. A microenterprise center and transitional housing facility could be an excellent symbiotic pairing. The church could reach out to its surrounding

community in a powerful way, and the residents of the transitional housing could have the additional spiritual and social support.

Proposed St Matthew's Lutheran Church

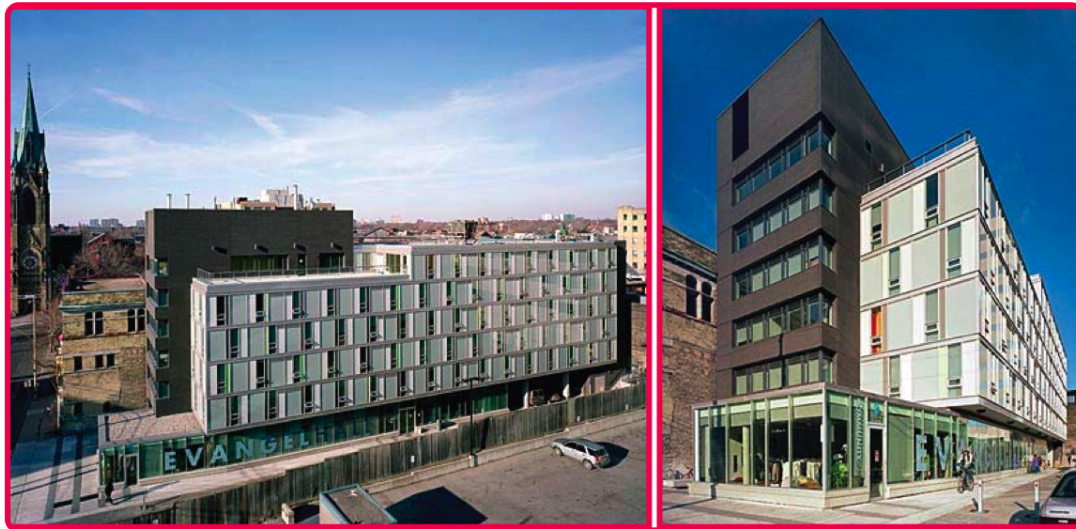


Images Provided By swdcblog.com

Fig. 4u St Matthew's New Building Proposal

Chapter 5: Program Development

Transitional Housing Precedent Analysis



Evangel Hall architectsAlliance

Toronto, ON Canada
57, 000 Total SF
Transitional Housing + Supportive Services + Retail

- 84 units of transitional supportive housing
- 30 apartments for people with mental health issues
- 6 apartments for people with acquired brain injuries
- Bachelor, one-bedroom, two-bedroom apartments.
- Fully-furnished units with private washrooms and kitchens
- On-site support for residents with mental health issues
- Day-to-day living, life skills training, and counseling
- A fully equipped teaching kitchen to assist residents with cooking and life-skills

Fig. 5a Evangel Hall Overview

In order to understand the architectural implications of a mixed-use transitional housing facility, Evangel Hall in Toronto, Canada was examined as a precedent. The building was designed to combine transitional housing, supportive amenities such as counseling and food service, as well as a retail space for selling second-hand clothing.



Evangel Hall
Massing

Fig. 5b Evangel Hall Massing

Retail and services are located on the ground floor with housing above. Each programmatic piece is clearly distinguished by changes in fenestration and materials.

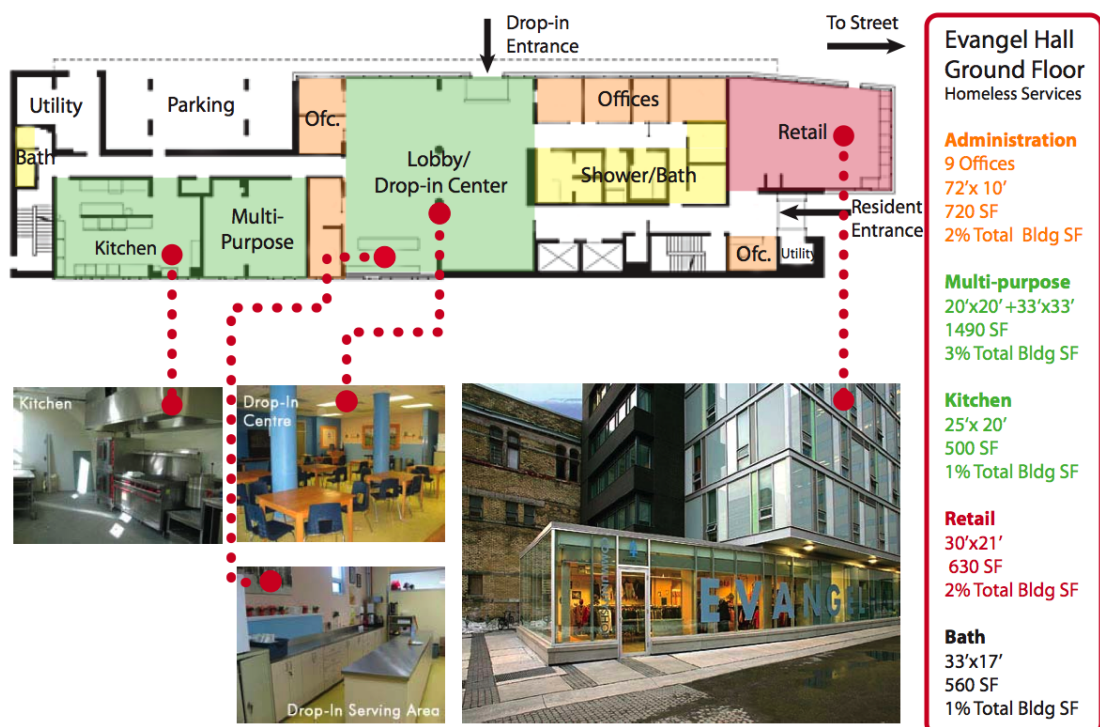


Fig. 5c Evangel Hall Ground Floor Layout

The ground floor of the facility contains a number of flexible spaces including a multi-purpose room and large lobby that double as a dining space when the serving kitchen is in use. Retail is located at the end of the floor and separates itself from the housing tower by extending towards the street. The ground floor also serves as the administrative floor with offices throughout.

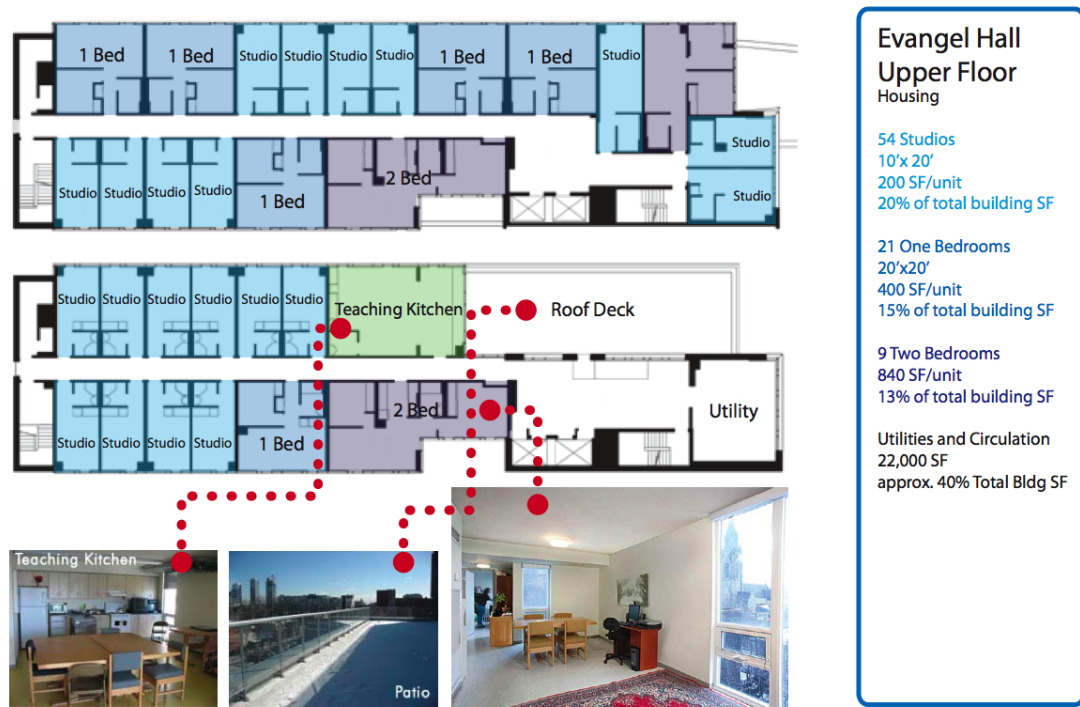


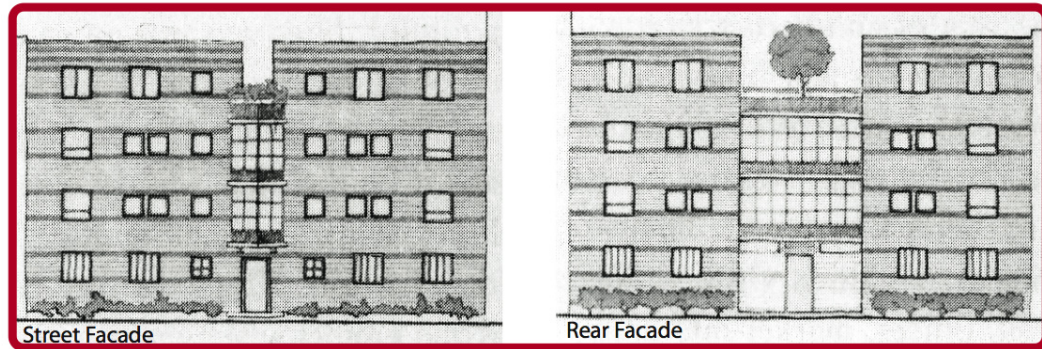
Fig. 5d Evangel Hall Upper Floors

The upper floors of the facility have a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units for residents at varying stages of their transition out of homelessness. The sixth floor units have access to a life-skills teaching kitchen and a roof deck patio¹².

The primary lesson from examining Evangel Hall is the successful placement of program by putting housing on top of community, administrative, and retail facilities.

¹² *Architectural Record* Oct. 2008: 197-98. *Architectural Record*. McGraw Hill Construction, Oct. 2008. Web. Aug. 2009.

Childcare Housing Precedent Analysis



Housing the Homeless - Mother and Child

Unbuilt

New York, NY

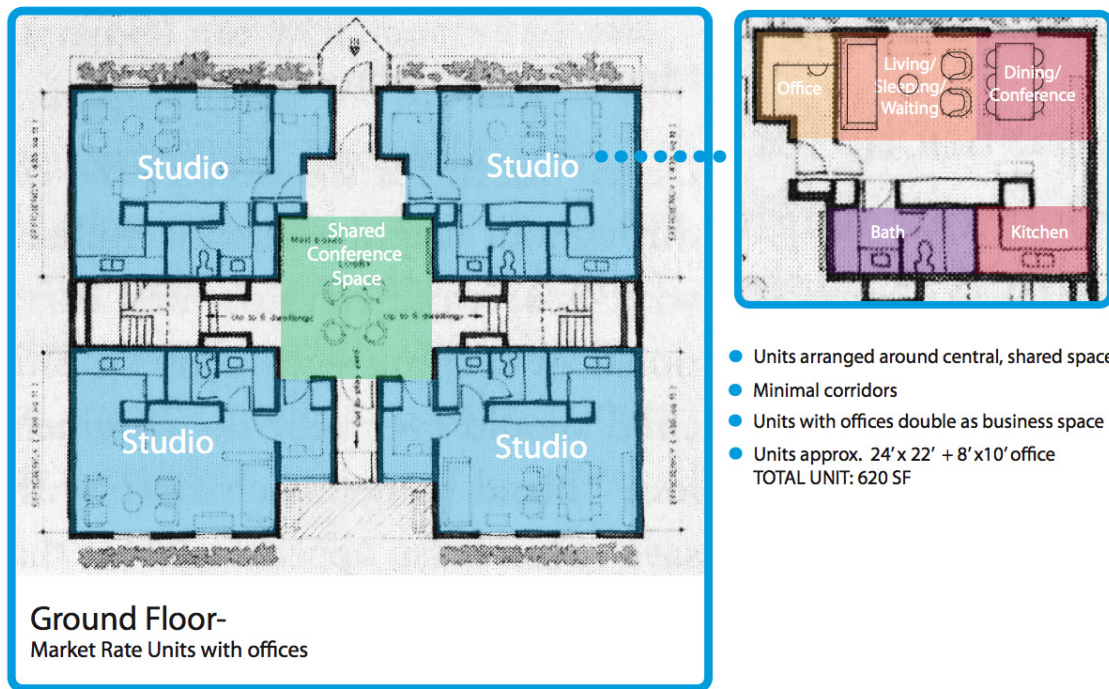
Homeless Family Units + Shared Childcare + Market Rate Units

- Footprint approx. 72' x 52'
Total Footprint: 3750 SF
- TOTAL BUILDING: 14,300 SF
- 8 Market-Rate Units
8 Homeless Family Units

16 TOTAL UNITS

Fig. 5e Mother and Child Housing Overview

Housing the Homeless-Mother and Child is an unbuilt design proposal for homeless mothers and their children. This mixed-income, small-scale apartment building was designed so that working mothers could share childcare in a centralized space on every floor.



Graphic by: Katherine Solether

Fig. 5f Mother and Child Housing Ground Floor

On the ground floor live/work studios share a central conference space. Market rate units are placed at the ground floor as a safety buffer for the families upstairs.

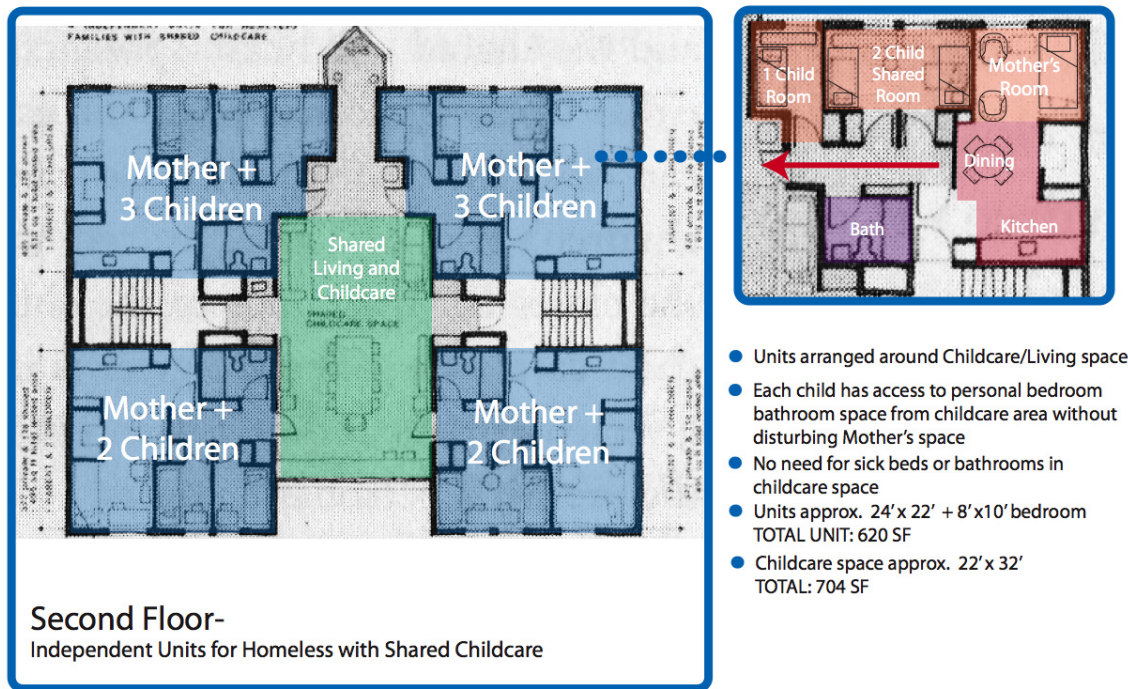


Fig. 5g Mother and Child Housing Childcare Floor

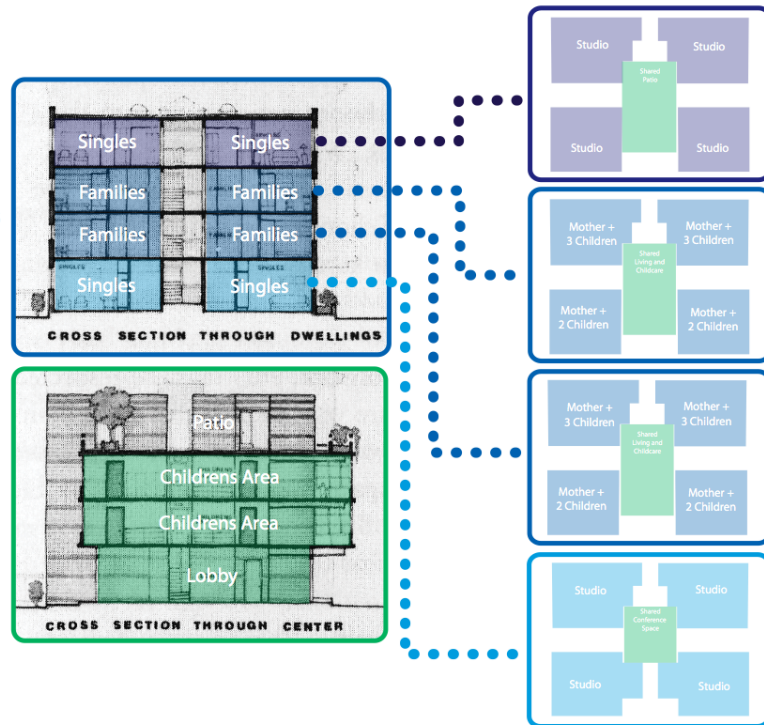
The second and third floors are arranged so that a child's bedroom and bathroom are directly accessible to the childcare space. The Mother's bedroom and living area has a second entrance. Under the supervision of a childcare worker, children are able to use their own beds and bathrooms during the day without disturbing the mother's space. Neighboring families are bonded through the daily use of a shared space.

Chilcare Housing Massing

Ground Floor-Market Rate Units

Second and Third Floor- Homeless
Family Units

Fourth Floor Market Rate Units



Graphic by: Katherine Solether

Fig. 5h Mother and Child Housing Sections

The bottom and top floors of the building are market rate units. This is to give the project economic viability as well as prevent the building from being labeled as homeless housing.¹³ Unfortunately, the arrangement of unit types by floor segregates the building occupants so that homeless families would seldom interact with their market rate neighbors. What is learned from this study is the creative use of shared childcare space as a means for helping mothers attain and retain employment while providing them with a community of others with similar circumstances.

¹³ Wallis, Brian. *If You Lived Here : The City in Art, Theory, and Social Activism A*

Project by Martha Rosler (Discussions in Contemporary Culture , No 6). New

York: New, 1998. Print.

Microenterprise Precedent Analysis

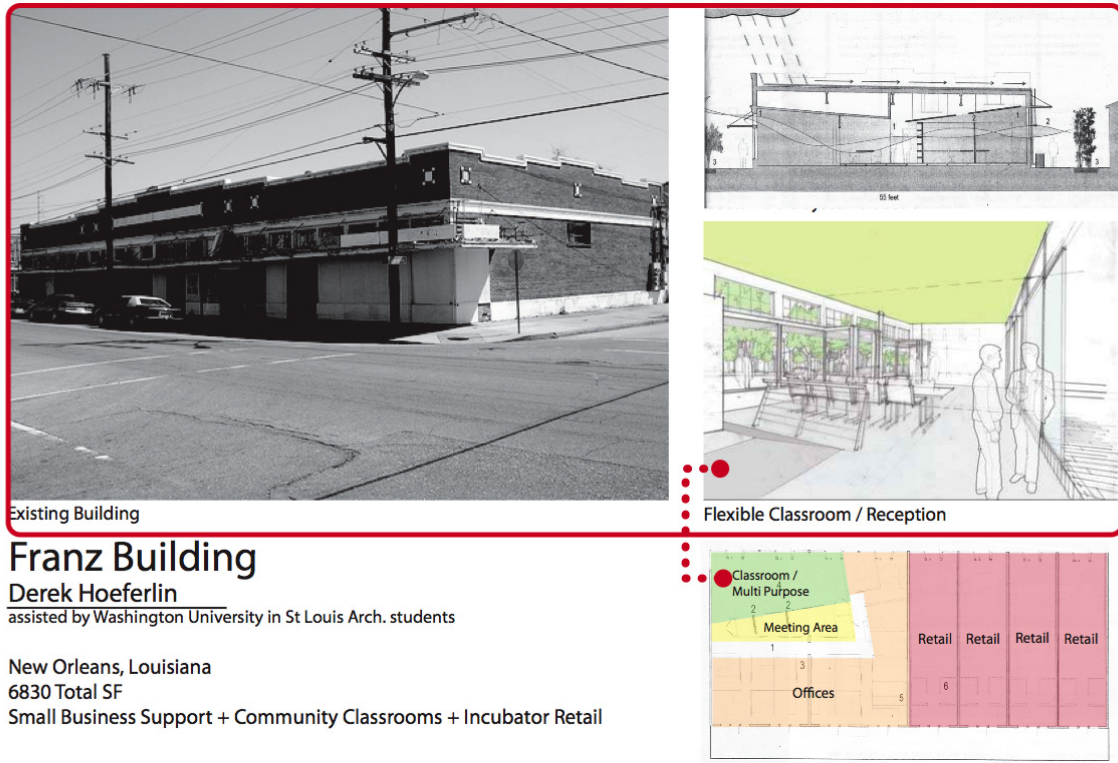


Fig. 5i Franz Microenterprise Building Overview

The Franz Building is a historic retail structure in New Orleans, Louisiana. The economic decline of the area after hurricane Katrina in 2005 resulted in the abandonment of over half of the building's rental space. Derek Hoeflerlin and a group of architecture students converted half of the building into a microenterprise support center to aid in reinvigorating the economy of the neighborhood.

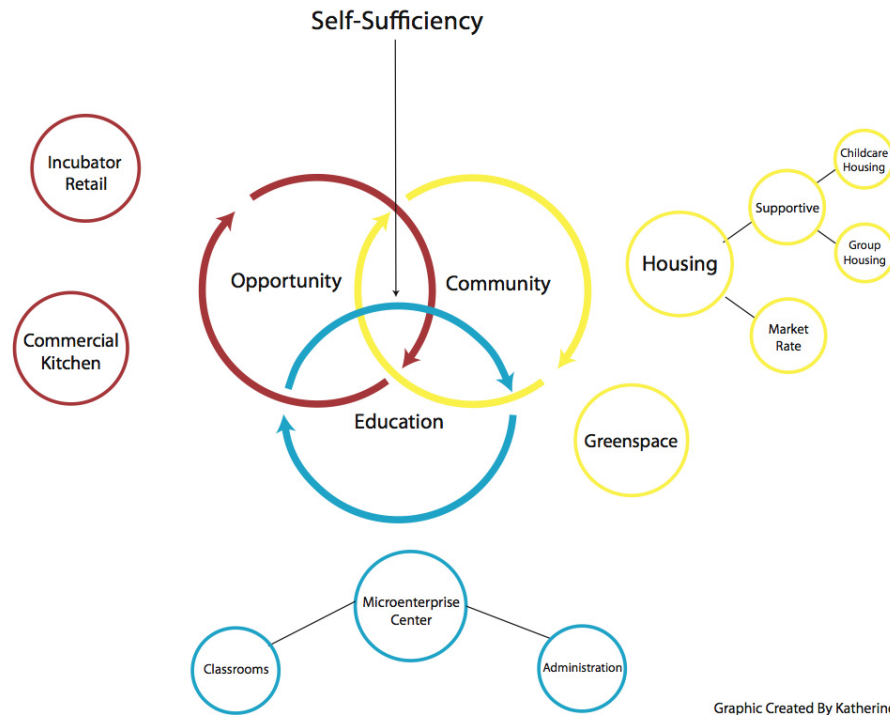


Fig. 5j Franz Microenterprise Building Layout

Half of the building was divided into four incubator retail spaces and the other half was converted into training and administrative spaces. A meeting and room served as a buffer between the lobby/flexible classroom and the more private offices in the back of the building¹⁴. What is significant about this project is the combination of microenterprise training and support with adjacent incubator retail all in one facility.

¹⁴ Hoeflerlin, Derek. "The Franz Building: A Strong Advocation for Adaptive Re-Use in Post-Katrina New Orleans." *Journal of Green Building* 4.1 (2009): 23-40. Print.

Program Development



Graphic Created By Katherine Solether

Fig. 5k Program Development

Program Worksheet				
Housing + Childcare	30 Market Rate 30 Homeless Women and Family Units 60 Units TOTAL			
	27 Studio 27 One Bedroom 9 Two Bedroom 3 Shared Childcare Areas Playground Area	360 SF/unit 640 SF/unit 1000 SF/unit 920 SF/area	6480 SF 17280 SF 9000 SF 2760 SF	35,520 SF
Microenterprise Support	1 Lobby/ Reception 3 Classrooms 1 Commercial Kitchen 1 Dining Area 1 Multipurpose 8 Offices 1 Breakroom/Copy Public Bathrooms	300 SF 500 SF/room 500 SF 400 SF 400 SF 90 SF/Ofc. 240 SF 300 SF	300 SF 1500 SF 500 SF 400 SF 400 SF 720 SF 240 SF 300 SF	4360 SF
	6 Incubator Retail Spaces	1000 SF/unit	6000 SF	6000 SF
St Matthews Church	Mechanical		750 SF	
	Stairs/Elevators		3540 SF	
	Circulation	15% of Building	7900 SF	12,190 SF
			TOTAL:	60,900 SF
	Sanctuary	5000 SF	5000 SF	
	Administration Classrooms	5000 SF	5000 SF	10,000 SF

Graphic by Katherine Solether

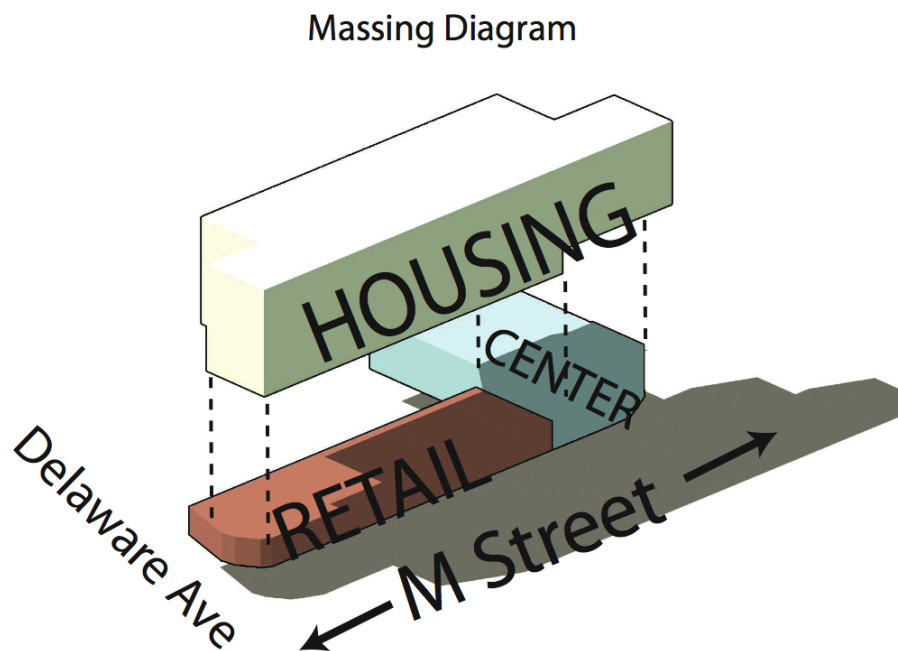
Fig. 5l Program Worksheet

After analyzing precedents in transitional housing, childcare housing, mixed income housing, and microenterprise facilities, I decided that the program should be broken into three major parts: housing with childcare, a microenterprise support center, and incubator retail space. The housing would be broken into four parts supportive group housing for those without children, supportive childcare housing for transitioning families, market rate one bedroom units and market rate two bedroom units. The microenterprise center would be composed of flexible classroom spaces, offices, and commercial teaching kitchen. Incubator retail would be small low-rent spaces with accessibility to street traffic. These program choices were intended to take advantage of the successful community building of transitional housing precedents while providing a greater chance for individual financial success through microenterprise. The microenterprise facility would provide the opportunities to unlikely recipients like the Grameen Bank with the necessary educational support for starting a small business in the United States.

Chapter 6: Design

Program And Massing

The design proposal program was broken into three distinct parts: the educational or microenterprise center, the opportunity or retail mass, and the community or housing mass. Each part was arranged in the final design according to its relationship to the site and other program elements.



Graphic Created By Katherine Solether

Fig. 6a Program Massing Diagram

Since the current context surrounding the selected site does little to create a street life along M Street, the massing of the final design results from a desire to create a stronger M street frontage. The retail portion of the program was placed on the ground

floor along M Street and at the corner of Delaware Avenue, in order to take advantage of the frequent pedestrian and vehicle traffic and to give the retail space the most prominent corner of the site at Delaware Avenue. The microenterprise center was placed on the western corner of the site, the second most visible corner. The center is two stories in height in order to maximize square footage while minimizing street frontage. This also allows for a more open, double-height lobby and lecture space at the front of the center.

Above the microenterprise center and retail space is six floors of housing. The housing is arranged around a double-loaded corridor resulting in a bar-shaped building that maximizes northern and southern sun exposure.

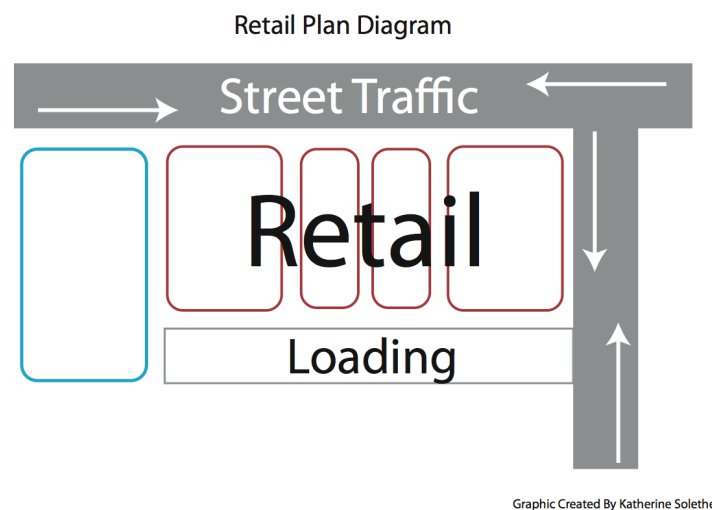


Fig. 6b First Floor Plan Diagram

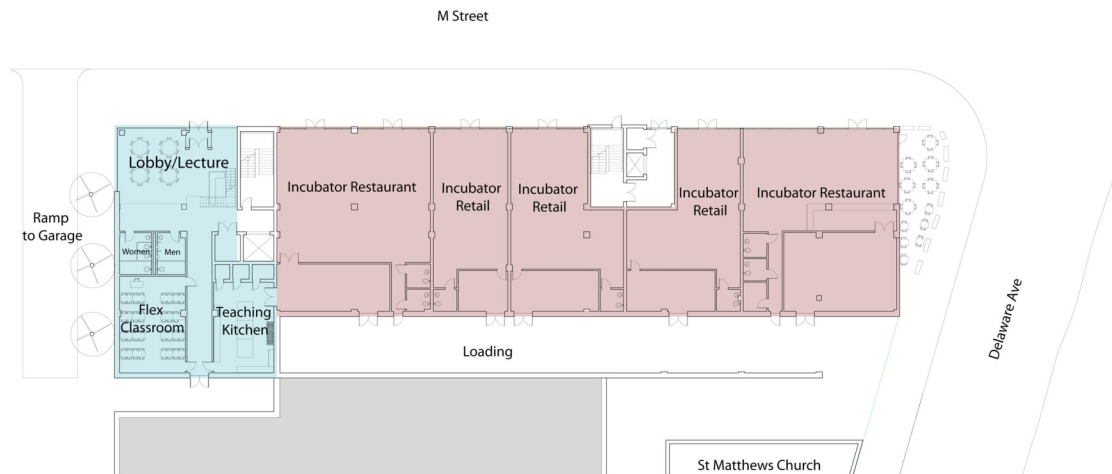
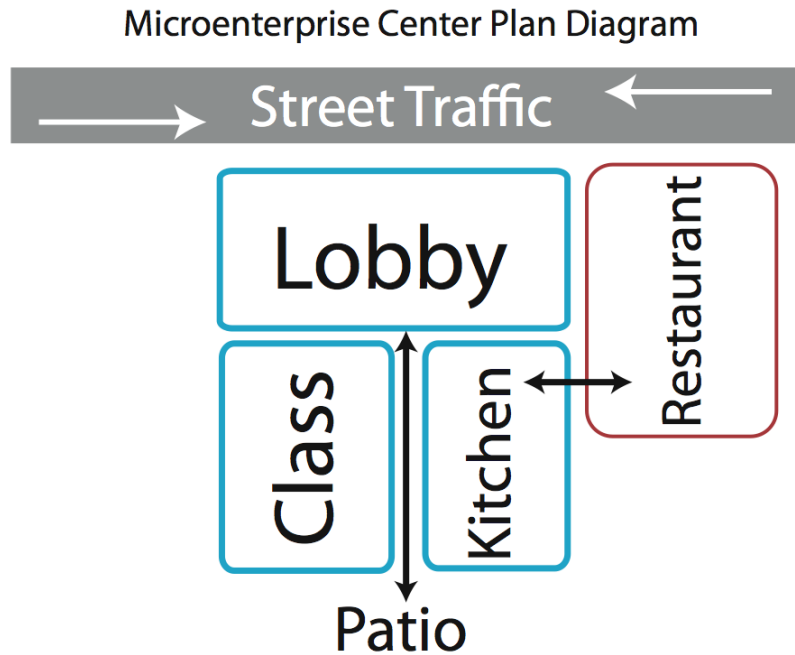


Fig. 6c First Floor Plan

Retail space takes up the majority of the M Street frontage. The retail spaces are divided by the width of a structural bay. The smaller spaces are about twenty-five feet by sixty-five feet. The larger spaces are fifty feet by sixty-five feet. The spaces on each end are larger to accommodate a possible restaurant or other food service enterprise. On the Delaware Avenue corner, space for outdoor dining has been given. The retail space adjacent to the microenterprise center opens to the center's teaching kitchen so that the center could potentially sponsor a restaurant or cafeteria to the community. In anticipation of many different types of retail, a loading area has been created on the south of the building with access from Delaware Avenue.



Graphic Created By Katherine Solether

Fig. 6d Microenterprise Center Plan Diagram

The lobby of the microenterprise center faces the street and a large multi-purpose room and kitchen are behind the entry space. The lobby serves as a secondary entrance to the residential portion of the building. The street-facing entrance would be used during the day, but for additional security at night the microenterprise center entrance would be the sole point of entry and a doorman would sit at the front desk. The multi-purpose room is capable of being used as a dining space for large group meetings, resident meals served from the teaching kitchen, or the room can be partitioned into two separate classrooms.

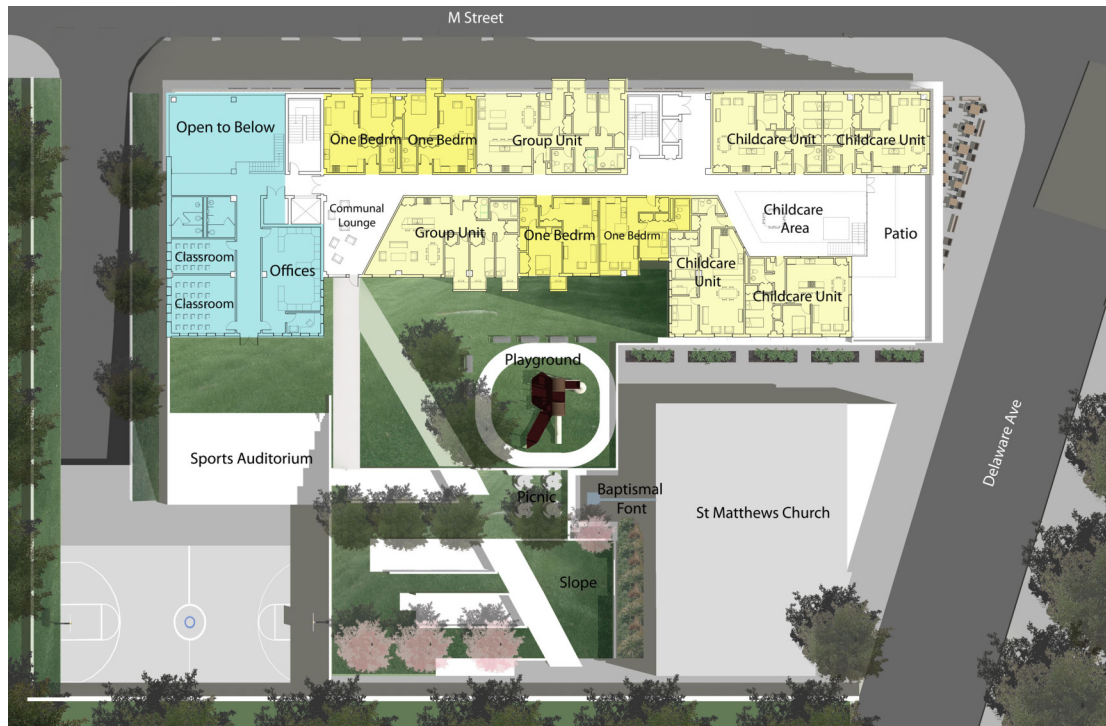


Fig. 6e Second Floor Plan and Site Plan

The second floor of the building consists of the upper level of the microenterprise center and the first level of housing.

The placement of the loading dock on the south side of the building created a problematic condition for the green space at the rear of the site. The garden could have been disconnected from the building by a loud and obtrusive loading area. To remedy this problem, the fill excavated for the construction of the parking garage underneath the site is used to terrace the green space so that the top of the slope meets the building at the second floor. The result is a loading area buried underneath the backyard and a green space with different levels for different uses.

St. Matthew's Church has access to the green space from the diagonal pathway on the southeast corner of the site. A garden space with high walls wraps the perimeter of the church building. In one of the garden spaces a fountain extends from the baptismal font on the interior of the sanctuary out into the garden. Benches shaded by large trees

surround the garden making it a quiet place of reflection separate from the busy play spaces above.



Fig. 6f Birdseye View of the Backyard

The west side of the green space is designed with pre-teen and teenage residents in mind. There is a paved area with basketball goals and bleachers that could be used for sports or outdoor performances. The shallow bleachers also provide a comfortable place to relax and congregate. At the highest level of the backyard, there is a playground with benches surrounding it. The playground is placed at the highest level so that parents or childcare givers can watch the smaller children on the playground, but easily keep an eye on children playing at lower levels. A diagonal pathway punctuated by stairs is the primary access from the green space to the street. A ramp on the west side of the backyard is a secondary pathway.



Fig. 6g Backyard Picnic Area

On the lower terraces, there is an area with picnic tables and a sloped green, both intended for parties and gatherings.

The roof is also a green space for the use of building residents. A wellness and fitness center is placed on the west side, and a large vegetable garden is planted on the east end. The vegetable garden is potentially as didactic as the teaching kitchen. The produce grown in the garden could be used in the restaurants on the ground floor or sold to the public directly in the form of a produce stand.



Fig. 6h M Street Perspective Facing Southwest

Figure 6b depicts the building as seen from the bus stop at the northeast corner of Delaware Avenue and M Street. The northern housing mass of the building acts as a partition between the southern portion of the building and the street. The balconies shown in figure 6b serve the childcare space while the balconies shown in figure 6c serve the communal lounges at the end of each floor. A new building for St. Matthew's Church is seen along Delaware Avenue.



Fig. 6i M Street Perspective Facing Southeast

The building is concrete construction to complement its mid-twentieth century neighbors. Since the building contains multiple types of housing, both supportive and market rate, it is important to blend the housing types so that the supportive housing can not be easily distinguished and potentially stigmatized as housing for the homeless. Unit types and sizes are not readily apparent from the exterior and have the appearance of being arranged randomly despite a subtle pattern. The illusion of randomness is created by the alternating position of cantilevered offices, which slide out from the façade like small apothecary drawers. These projections also engage the street in a more dynamic way than a flat façade.



Fig. 6j North Elevation

Stair towers punctuate the north elevation. These towers provide easy street access for residents, and they introduce a vertical element to break up the horizontal character of the façade composition.



Fig. 6k South Elevation

Each window on the south elevation is shaded by three eighteen-inch louvers at the top to reduce heat gain without altering the visibility to the exterior. These louvers can be seen more clearly in figure (6e). As seen in the east and west elevations, the new building maintains a similar height to its M Street neighbors.



Fig. 6l West Elevation



Fig. 6m East Elevation

Microenterprise Center



Fig. 6n Microenterprise Center Exterior – Facing Southeast

The lobby of the microenterprise center is its most celebrated space. The use of a curtain wall on two sides offers a sense of transparency and hospitality toward the surrounding community. An open plan with a figural stair, balcony, and pendant lights create a flexible but formal room capable of uses ranging from exhibitions, receptions, and lectures to study groups and tutoring sessions. Angled acoustic panels with a sunflower mural painted on the surface bring color and warmth into the space.



Fig. 6o Microenterprise Center Lobby Interior



Fig. 6p Section Through Microenterprise Center and Housing

The section perspective shown in figure 6n shows the relationship of the microenterprise center to other programmatic elements. Public restrooms separate the lobby from teaching and office spaces. The outdoor patio serving the communal lounge on the third floor is placed on the roof of the center. The second floor of the center opens out onto a grassy plinth in front of the auditorium bleachers. The ramp to underground parking is west of the center.



Fig. 6q Commercial Teaching Kitchen

The teaching kitchen of the microenterprise center is fully equipped with commercial grade appliances. A long table for food preparation and teaching demonstrations divides the room in half. An opening is made in the far wall with sliding windows to be used as a serving line when the center serves residents or hosts events. The kitchen is available as instructional space and could also be rented by food service entrepreneurs who may not be able to afford access to a commercial kitchen and could not, therefore, meet American health codes.

Retail



Fig. 6r Retail Corner at Delaware Avenue - Facing Southwest



Fig. 6s Outdoor Dining Space - Facing North

As stated previously, the retail portion of the building is given the most prominent corner at Delaware Avenue. As an extension of the corner restaurant, outdoor dining space activates the corner.



Fig. 6t Salon Interior

The salon pictured in figure 6r is an illustration of what could be placed in one of the smaller retail spaces. It is not prescriptive of what would actually take place in the space because a multitude of uses could be applied in the space. The salon example could serve as either a regular business or as a stylist training facility where services are offered at a reduced rate to the public.

Housing

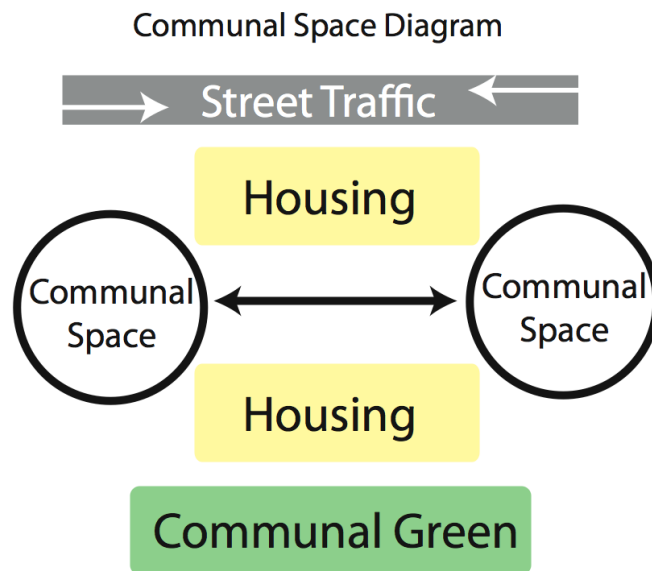


Fig. 6u Communal Space Diagram



Fig. 6u Communal Lounge

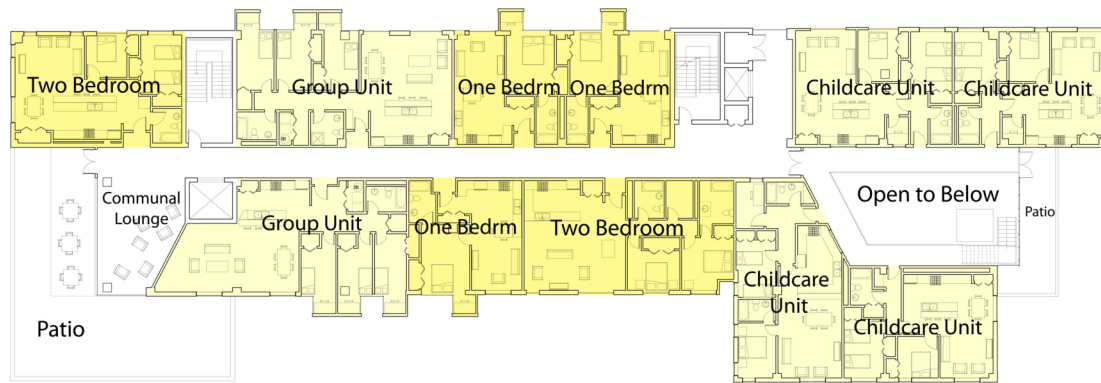
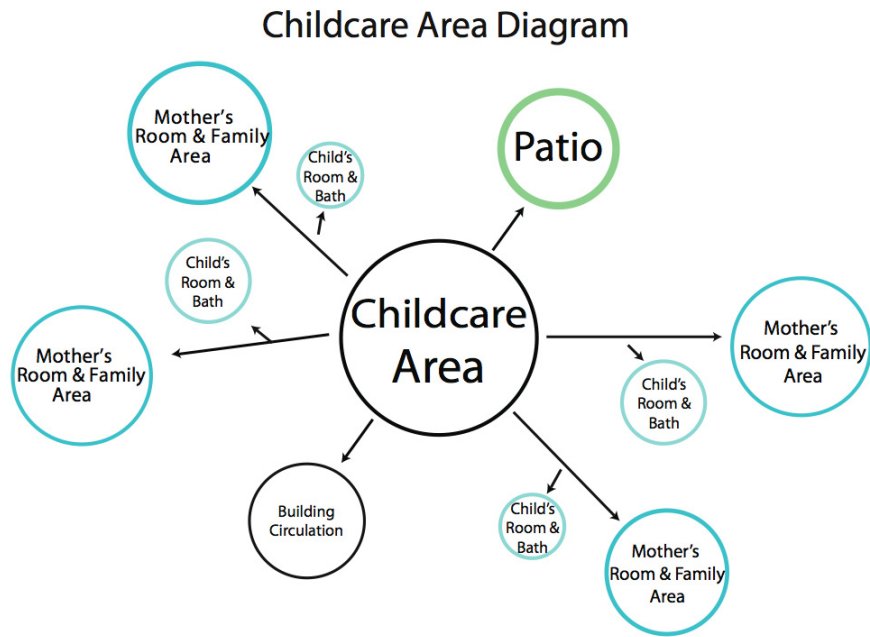


Fig. 6v Upper Floor Plan

The housing portion of the building is organized into two rows of apartments separated by a double-loaded corridor. The north row of apartments faces M Street and the south row faces the backyard green space. At the end of each corridor is a shared space. The west end is a communal lounge and patio and the east end is the shared childcare area and patio. This placement of communal spaces brings additional light into the corridor.

The housing is a mixture of four different unit types: group housing, childcare housing, market rate one-bedroom units and market rate two-bedroom units. Both childcare and group housing (shown in lighter yellow) are considered supportive or affordable housing and come with additional services associated with the microenterprise center.

Childcare Housing



Graphic Created By Katherine Solether

Fig. 6w Childcare Area Diagram

The design for the childcare housing is based on the homeless mother housing precedent described in Chapter 5. Apartment units surround a central open space, furnished to function as a living room and a daycare. The interiors of the surrounding units are arranged with the children's bedrooms and bathroom nearest the apartment entry so that a child may use his or her own bedroom or bathroom during the day without entering the mother's room and living spaces. Instead of a separate public bathroom and sickbay necessary in a traditional daycare facility, children would have the ability to nap in their own bed and use their own toilet. A parent would have the ability to come home in the middle of the day and monitor her children's quality of care.

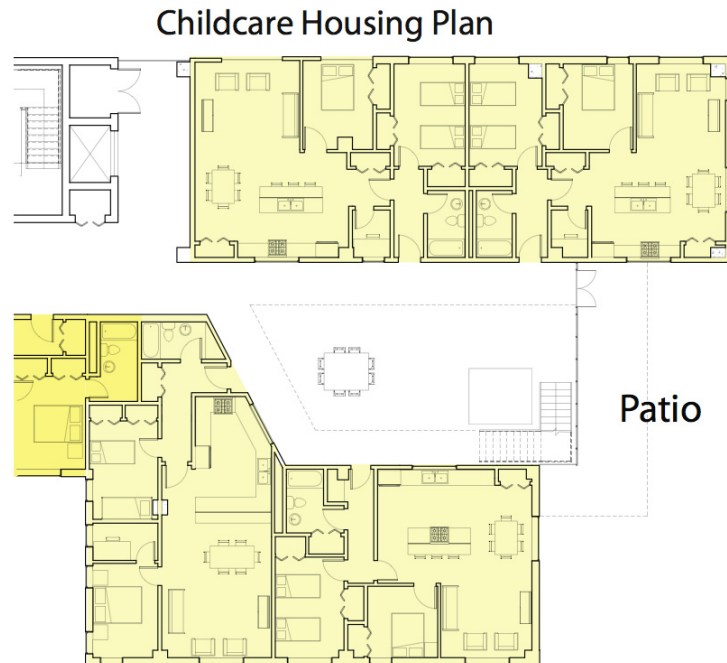


Fig. 6x Childcare Area Floor Plan



Fig. 6y Section Through Retail and Childcare Housing - Facing Southwest

The central space functions as a childcare space during the workday, but in the evenings and on weekends the space functions as communal living room for the surrounding unit residents. Neighboring children who become friends at daycare can continue to play together outside of their homes after hours. Having children who are

friends is often the impetus for the formation of neighboring parent friendships. The establishment of a communal support system is vital for formerly homeless and their families, and this shared space will foster the building of those new relationships.



Fig. 6z Section Through Childcare Area

A window facing the childcare space is located in the kitchen and office of each apartment unit so that a parent could constantly monitor what is happening in the childcare area.

The space has a tree house with enclosed platforms, a balcony, and a slide in which kids can climb and play. There is a large table for eating, playing games, and doing schoolwork. Comfortable furniture is provided for adults to use for reading or chatting together.



Fig. 6aa Childcare Unit

Inside each childcare apartment unit, the living spaces have an open plan. A long island with a cook top and bar seating is provided so that a parent could cook dinner while chatting with a child seated at the bar or watching the other children play in the living room. The spaces are also brightly lit with windows stretching from floor to ceiling.

Group Housing

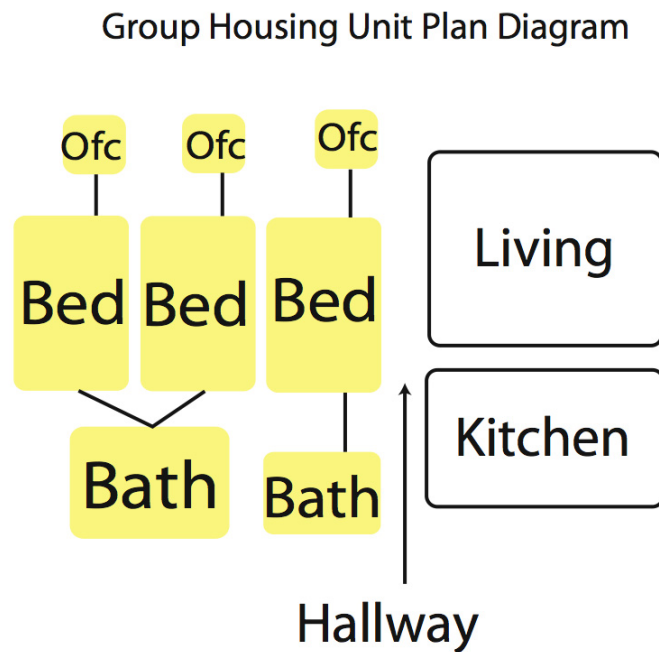


Fig. 6bb Group Housing Unit Plan Diagram

The group housing units have three small bedrooms and two bathrooms. The living and kitchen spaces are the largest to foster roommate interaction. Like the childcare units, the kitchen also has an island with bar seating and a sink so that people can sit at the bar while others are preparing food or cleaning up.

Group Housing Unit Plan



Fig. 6cc Group Housing Unit Plan

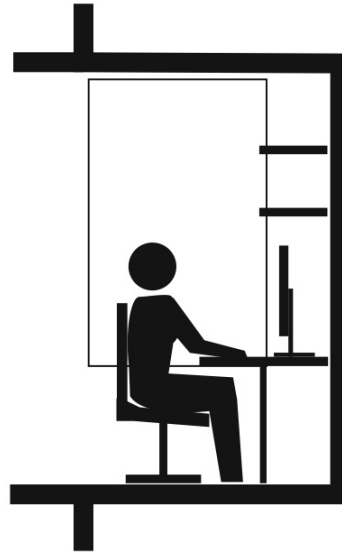


Fig. 6dd Group Housing Unit Bedroom

Since each person living in group housing will be either in training or running her own small business, each bedroom has a cantilevered office space. This space provides

much-needed additional workspace and also provides a bright retreat from an otherwise snug bedroom.

Cantilevered Office Section



Graphic Created By Katherine Solether

Fig. 6ee Cantilevered Office Section

Market Rate Housing

Market Rate One Bedroom Unit Diagram

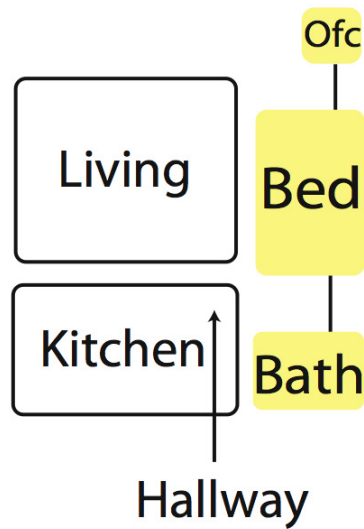


Fig. 6ff Market Rate One Bedroom Unit Plan Diagram

Market Rate One Bedroom Unit

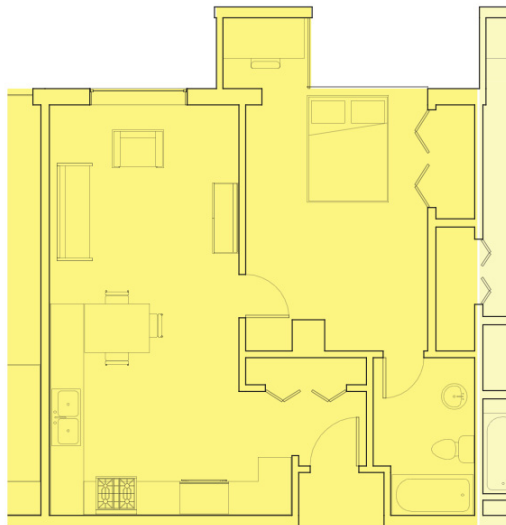


Fig. 6gg Market Rate One Bedroom Unit Plan

Market Rate Two Bedroom Unit Plan



Fig. 6hh Market Rate Two Bedroom Unit Plan



Fig. 6ii Market Rate Two Bedroom Interior

The market rate unit plans have larger spaces than the supportive housing units, but are still modest. Like the group housing unit, each one bedroom unit has a cantilevered office. The living space of the two-bedroom unit is similar to the childcare

and group housing by having an island with a bar in the kitchen and a large, open living and dining room.

Chapter 7: Response to Public Presentation

Panel Commentary

After presenting the research and design proposal for the building to a public audience, the project received both positive and negative feedback. The following is a summary of the comments ordered by topic.

Urban and Site Planning:

The social aspirations of the project are admirable. The idea of combining entrepreneurship with retail is an interesting idea and adds back the street character that was lost in Southwest DC during the 60s during urban renewal. However, the building does not adequately turn the corner at Delaware Avenue. The diagonal street meeting a perpendicular street is a unique condition. Like many other buildings in D.C. with similar site characteristics, this building should have a strong corner presence.

If the backyard is supposed to be accessible to the church, easier access should be given. Perhaps a stair along the north alley could give church members more ownership over the backyard and make the church more approachable for residents of the building.

Space Planning:

The placement of communal space on both ends of the building clarifies the diagram and creates a well-lit internal pedestrian street that should foster the desired communal interaction.

The location of the Childcare should have a closer relationship with the green space in the rear. Their placement on the far west corner of the building could be switched with the communal lounge for easier access to the backyard. The placement of the stair tower might occupy too much of the street façade. This valuable street frontage

should be given to the retail. A dead end corridor is likely present and would need revision to ensure that fire codes are met. If the fire stair is set back and more internal to the building, perhaps balconies could be used to give the building a greater porosity to the street.

Retail Space:

The retail space is too large and too similar to a conventional American retail model. A greater range of retail scales should be considered “from the kiosk to the anchor tenant.” Smaller retail scales would provide enterprises such as an arts and crafts business to have a small display without using a larger retailer as a middle man. Suggestions included programmatic pairing so that similar types of businesses could capitalize on each other’s synergy, and retail space could act as an open market similar to the Lexington Market in Baltimore.

Response to Panel Commentary

Retail:

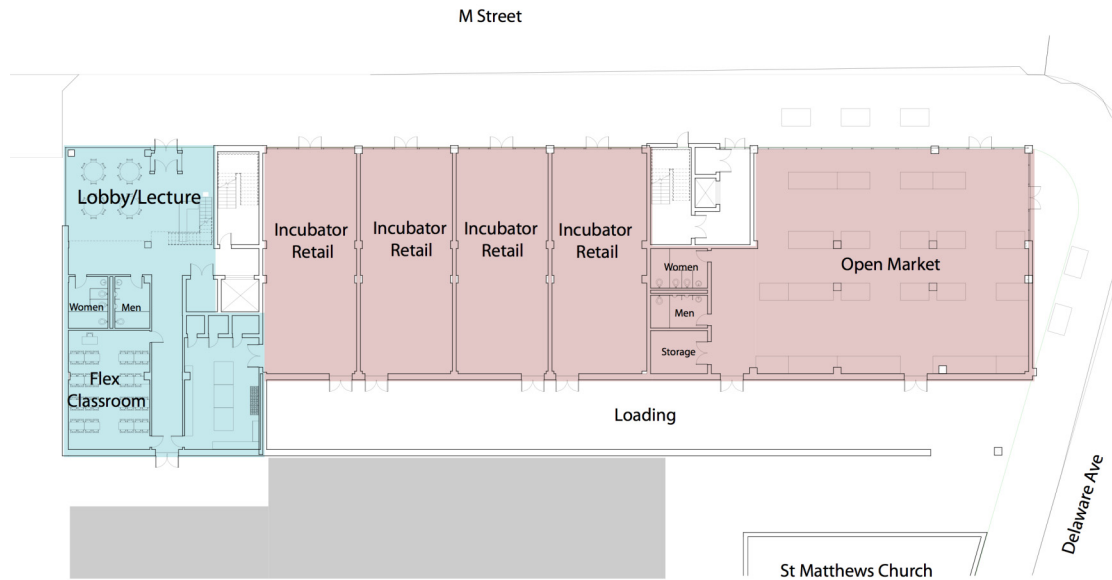


Fig. 7a Revised First Floor Plan

There was a general consensus that the ground floor retail should be revised to accommodate a wider range of retail scales. A simple correction involves removing the current interior walls forming an open shell in which kiosks or stalls of varying size could be arranged. The corner restaurant could remain an anchor tenant, but shrink in size so that the entrance to the market is at the corner of Delaware Avenue.

Portable or collapsible kiosks could be placed along the street outside of the building.



Fig. 7b St. John City Market

The new interior of the retail space would have an open, airy feel similar to St. John City Market in St. John, Canada. The space could also be opened up to live performances that could serve as a backdrop or a featured event like at the Lexington Market in Baltimore figure 7c.



Fig. 7c Lexington Market Performance Space

Space Planning

The placement of the childcare patio on the eastern end of the building caused several significant problems. First, with out and additional fire stair, a dead end corridor exists that poses a danger to residents. Second, the patio is too separate from the backyard green space. Finally, by having a void space at the corner of Delaware Avenue, the building's corner presence is weakened. A simple rearrangement of the childcare units and creating a new patio space adjacent to the backyard can resolve all of these problems.

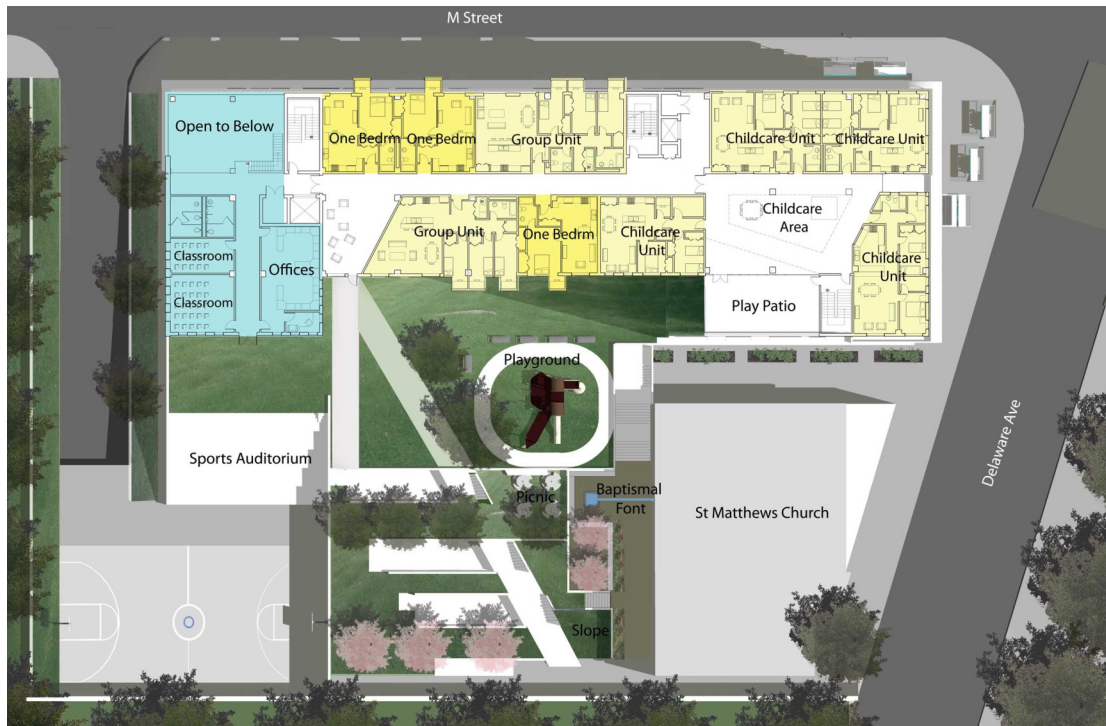


Fig. 7d Revised Second Floor Plan

In this plan, a childcare unit is switched with the old patio space. This switch reduces the porosity on Delaware Avenue and strengthens the corner view. The childcare area is immediately accessible to the play patio, and the patio is connected to the backyard. A low fence and gate could separate the childcare area from the public green. A new emergency exit stair has also been placed to eliminate the dead end corridor. This stair could act as internal circulation for the childcare areas, but would not be a street entrance. Having a separate entrance for the childcare residents could potentially prevent them from interacting with other building residents.

The new configuration would allow ample sunlight into the childcare space, and the fire stair could become an exterior stair reducing heating and cooling costs. A minor consequence of this arrangement is that the unit to the west of the childcare area has a more cramped interior arrangement and the kitchen windows could no longer overlook

the childcare space. However, the benefit of the providing the childcare space with a direct connection to the backyard outweighs the value of having kitchen windows for one of the four affected units.

It was strongly suggested that the building circulation be removed from the street façade and placed against the loading access to the south. This is possible, but not ideal as it would cause the loss of an entire childcare unit which could not be replaced along the north wall, because it would no longer have direct access to the childcare area. An alternative might be the removal of the northeast stair and elevator. An additional elevator could be added at the microenterprise center. The microenterprise center entrance would then become the primary entry and exit for all residents, and the egress stair in the childcare area would be a secondary exit for emergency use only.

Urban Planning



Fig. 7e Revised Church Connection

Concern was raised that St Matthew's church appeared to be cut off from the rear green space. The addition of a broad stair at the northwest corner of the church would

provide a direct pathway between the church and the backyard as well as shaded place to gather. Another smaller stair could also fit near the rear door of the church. Additional landscaping and benches would be added to the small garden space north of the church.

In order to properly address the urban planning concerns about a building placed on a site where a diagonal street meets an orthogonal grid, a number of successful precedents around D.C. were examined. Each building is a different type that relates to the program of the design proposal.



Fig. 7f Washington House

The Washington House is residential building that uses curvature and ribbon windows to address the acute angle of its site. The building is also pulled away from the street on one side to create a less imposing street presence.



Fig. 7g 1924 Pennsylvania Avenue

This mixed use office and retail building maintains the exact angle of its site. Ribbon windows and concrete bands at each floor wrap the corner.



Fig. 7h Edmund Burke School

The character of the south wall of the Edmund Burke School is different from the west. A curtain wall volume and a shading structure on the roof are used to at the corner to bridge the two elevations. The entrance to the building is set back from the street and inset under the curtain wall.



Fig. 7i Revised M Street Corner

After examining other buildings, it was determined that a more solid east elevation would improve the Delaware corner. The new mass pictured in figure (X), created by the shifting of childcare units gives greater strength to the corner. Data established by banding at each floor level would be continuous, but new fenestration gives contrast to the corner.

Chapter 8: Design Conclusions

I. This thesis began with an examination of the dire state of homelessness in Washington, D.C. Washington has a disproportionately large homeless population compared to other U.S. cities. The unsettling nature of this problem and a desire to improve the city's socioeconomic status led to research in the various ways in which the city and charitable organizations have attempted to address the problem. It was important to discover where these groups are succeeding, and where they are failing. The primary focus of this research was the structure of each organization and its application through building program elements. Transitional housing stages were also carefully examined, including those of Central Union Mission and N Street Village. One of the weak links found in each example's transitional housing model was the necessity for finding a job after completing the in-house training program. This transition was often unsuccessful due to the unsteady employment histories and the frequently criminal backgrounds of program participants. Formerly homeless individuals needed a better way to become self-sufficient than relying on the availability of trusting employers.

After exposure to the concept of microenterprise as practiced by Mohamed Yunus' Grameen Bank, I began looking into ways to incorporate small-scale entrepreneurship into a transitional housing project of my own design. As I learned, there are many legal and social hurdles in implementing microenterprise in the United States. The project came to focus on ways to overcome those hurdles and enable formerly homeless individuals to create their own small businesses.

Transitional housing methods in the United States succeed at building supportive communities but rely too heavily on the traditional job market to bridge the gap between homelessness and self-sufficiency. Microenterprise models succeed at elevating disadvantaged people out of poverty, but do not provide the level of education and licensing necessary for successful application in a developed country. This thesis seeks to combine the successful community building of transitional housing with the business opportunity building of microenterprise by adapting the business development model to suit the unique requirements of entrepreneurship in the U.S. The design proposal accomplishes this merging of ideas by providing access to capital, training, entrepreneurial guidance as well as safe, affordable housing and childcare. The building program developed around these goals consisted of a microenterprise development center with classrooms a commercial teaching kitchen, low-rent retail space ranging from the kiosk to a small store or restaurant, market-rate housing, group housing, and childcare housing with shared childcare space. The placement of programmatic elements establish positive, symbiotic relationships at every scale including the building's relationship to the surrounding community, programmatic elements within the building, people and the outdoors, and individuals and families fostered by building amenity adjacencies. Southwest D.C. was selected as the ideal locale because of the neighborhood's needs for increased retail, discreetly affordable housing, and a lack of non-profit facilities for addressing its homeless. The building responds to its surrounding community by creating a new street front for M Street and brings in much-needed retail space. The community, will in turn provide the market for these retail spaces as well as the diversity of people necessary to make the transitional program successful. The building establishes a strong

relationship between indoor and outdoor spaces by providing an extensive green space for playing and leisure with apartment units and patios overlooking it. Unique relationships between programmatic elements are created such as the integration of childcare space with apartment living spaces and outdoor patio as well as the use of teaching spaces that are adjacent to hands on practice spaces like a commercial kitchen or retail kiosk. Hands-on training with real world application enables a program participant to gain the skills required to succeed in the complex American marketplace. Providing childcare is vital for single mothers to have a chance building their small businesses. Childcare units are arranged so that each child's bedroom and bathroom are accessible from the childcare space without passing through the mother's room, kitchen or family room. The childcare space is shared between neighboring families so that children spend their days with the security of being close to home, and working mothers are able to ensure the highest level of childcare quality. Communal lounges provide a gathering space for building residents who do not live in childcare units. Circulation pathways are placed to encourage consistent interaction between residents. Market rate units are mixed with group housing units to foster bonds between different types of people and different types of families. Mixing income levels also prevents potential stigmatization as "homeless housing." Encouraging interaction between different groups of people builds the type of communal strength that was observed in successful transitional housing facilities.

Many of the design decisions for this proposal are direct reactions to neighborhood demographics and physical characteristics, but other design moves are less site-specific and are more programmatically driven. General program solutions could potentially be

used in a different context. The building height and material selections are similar to the surrounding 1960s era apartment buildings. The building massing responds directly to the site by taking advantage M Street traffic and a north-south sun orientation. The buried loading condition with large terraced green space was also a solution to site constraints. Mixing income levels is feasible in Southwest Washington, D.C. because the neighborhood is already diverse and relatively open-minded, but this type of strategy may not be realistic in any community. Other more homogenous parts of Washington could not support a facility like the design proposal. The relationship between centralized childcare space and adjacent to family oriented apartments is a programmatic solution that could be applied in many other settings. Using communal interior and exterior spaces to facilitate relationships between neighbors could also be applied to any other multifamily housing building. Cantilevered office spaces for group housing and family apartment units to provide separate business work space within the tight confines of supportive housing is could be useful in any type of housing facility where space is at a premium. A microenterprise center connected to retail is a relationship that would work in areas where the supportive housing element was unnecessary, but where there was a need for increased commercial activity. Much of the design proposal was a specific reaction to its neighborhood context, but many of the programmatic innovations could be isolated and used in other facilities.

II. After completing the design, I have new questions about the challenges and potential obstacles the program may face. The first challenge is the possibility of local market shifts. What happens to residents whose businesses may fail? Do they leave to live in a

less specialized transitional housing facility? Do they stay on as a labor force for those entrepreneurs whose business are succeeding? Are they allowed to start over with a new business plan? What might this mean for the architecture?

There is also the possibility that the entire social experiment could fail. This could easily occur if small businesses do not take off and people are unable to stick to the program. If this happens, has the building been designed flexibly enough to accommodate new uses?

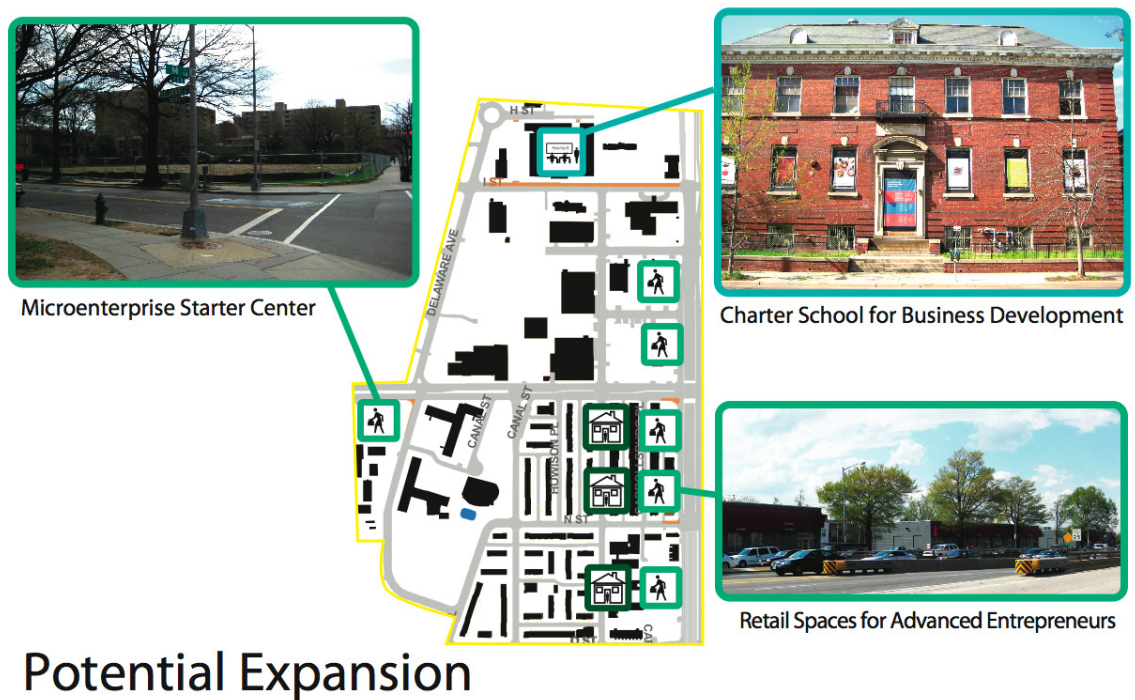


Fig. 8a Potential Microenterprise Development Expansion

On the other hand, what if a resident's business ventures are highly successful and they outgrow their space? Can the training wheels be removed and a complex of larger retail spaces with larger independent housing be created elsewhere in the community so that those business owners do not lose their customers? This complex could continue the urban planning challenges faced within Southwest DC. Perhaps this new complex could

be placed along South Capitol St where so much decay was noted in the areas' analysis. Perhaps this new complex could also include a charter school, grocery store and other mixed retail types. What if there was also an avenue for the highest achieving entrepreneurs to receive higher degrees in management or other forms of business administration? A satellite campus of a major institution could be brought to the area or students could be sent to one of the major universities in the area.

Another evolution of the current design is the duplication of the training center and retail from the housing into communities that may already have housing facilities, but do not have business training or retail space.

Despite these innovations, solving the problem of homelessness in D.C. is a tremendous undertaking and cannot be solved by these interventions alone. This thesis presents only a few instruments within a grand orchestra of programs that must be utilized to tackle such and immense social dilemma.

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