

# BRICK + BEAM DETROIT

## OVERVIEW

Detroit has a unique, character-rich building stock, but much of the city's neighborhood fabric has been decimated by abandonment and blight, there is therefore an urgent need to deal with vacant and neglected buildings. Detroiters have long been reinvesting in their — and sometimes their neighbor's — properties through the city's toughest times. A recent crop of new residents are planting roots in Detroit, buying vacant or neglected structures and investing sweat equity into rehabbing them. However, these rehabs and reinvestments are happening piecemeal with little knowledge of one another's projects or lessons learned — or knowledge of each other. There is a need for a centralized support network to connect rehabbers and property owners with resources and one another. Recognizing the complexity of rehabbing buildings married with unique complexities present in Detroit, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network, Detroit Future City Implementation Office (DFC), and Preservation Detroit have joined together to provide access to resources, share knowledge and talent, help demystify the process, and call building rehabbers to action.

## EVALUATION METRICS

- Number of participants in attendance and the diversity of their geographies across the city
- Number of events
- Report that details where rehabs are happening, what resources people are using, and where gaps need to be filled.

## OBJECTIVES

- Use Online mapping of rehab projects to show where and what type of investment is happening.
- Host content-rich social gatherings to provide low-key opportunities for rehabbers, tradespeople, or just the rehab-curious to meet each other, share stories, and turn engagement into action by inspiring next steps
- Organize peer- and expert-led hands-on and informational classes to build on existing talent and foster new talent while empowering property owners with the skills they need to tackle projects
- Create an online library of resources including detailed how-tos on subjects ranging from permitting to financing, including powerpoints and handouts from classes
- Distribute a physical 'Launch Box' to provide tangible tools, offer opportunities for next steps and a way to get connected to Brick+Beam and other organizations
- Launch an online forum for Q&A, tips, and recommendations for local contractors to help build a cache for rehabbers to use as a reference for their own projects
- Partner with complementary organizations to ensure that Brick + Beam is leveraging other work being done around the city and having a broad reach

## RESOURCES

- Knight Cities Challenge Grant (2015)

In January 2015 contributing organizations participated in the Knight Foundation's Urban Prototyping Bootcamp with IDEO, a creative consulting firm, and a team from Parsons New School of Design. (This culminated in a prototyping weekend in March held in Detroit where ideas were tested with over 100 people from across Detroit participating and giving their feedback.)

Brick + Beam was selected as a Knight Cities Challenge winner in March.

Monthly programming and website creation.

Knight Cities Challenge grant period began July 2015 and will continue through October 2016. The project will be seeking funding to continue beyond the grant.

SCHEDULE

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

JANUARY -  
OCTOBER

2015

2016

## INITIATIVE VITALS

### CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS:

Detroit Future City; Preservation Detroit; Michigan Historic Preservation Network

DFC REPRESENTATIVE: Victoria Olivier

INITIATIVE SCALE: Citywide (including Hamtramck and Highland Park)

INITIATIVE DURATION: January 2015 - October 2016

### RELEVANT PLANNING ELEMENTS:

Economic Growth, Neighborhood and Land and Building Assets Element

## DFC APPROACH

Detroit Future City Implementation Office seeks to stabilize neighborhoods to increase density and renew traditional neighborhoods and ultimately improve quality of life challenges that affect all Detroiters. While the city has an abundance of open space that DFC is actively working on there is a balance between Detroit's built and natural environments as transformational assets. Brick+Beam is a pivotal initiative that can help improve neighborhood markets, increase demand for trades labor, and engage residents in a new way. DFC will actively participate in event planning, outreach, best practices research, capacity building and strategic development of the initiative. DFC will link this initiative to other partnerships that have been created and as part of a broad array of strategies that can help strengthen neighborhoods across the city.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

D

IMPROVE SKILLS AND SUPPORT EDUCATION REFORM

A

ADDRESS QUALITY OF LIFE CHALLENGES THAT AFFECT ALL DETROITERS

B

CREATE DENSE, WALKABLE, MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOODS

E

RENEW TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS

F

USE AGGRESSIVE REGULATORY TOOLS TO REINFORCE LAND DEVELOPMENT, REUSE, AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES