

Greektown Neighborhood Vision Plan

Detroit, MI

Greektown, a historic district in downtown Detroit, is on the rise after decades of decline. Originally settled as a residential neighborhood in the 1830s, its Greek immigrant community established a neighborhood centered around a church, restaurants, coffeehouses and shops at the turn of the century.

As the composition of the population shifted, established Greek-owned shops and restaurants were sandwiched with new commercial tenants and a dwindling residential mix.

Today, there are no full-time residents living in Greektown, and about half of the neighborhood's 50 acres are filled with surface parking and vacant lots. While locals and tourists still visit the neighborhood for dining and nightlife, its authentic Greek cultural offerings have waned significantly.

The Neighborhood Vision Plan seeks to return Greektown into a vibrant mixed-use district, with a rhythm of cultural, commercial and residential uses that are linked by a focus on streetlife. OJB's framework plan incorporates complete streetscapes with signage, catenary lighting, seating, and trees, and urban open spaces that create highly programmable opportunities for the district. Vacant corner lots are activated by sports courts, fountains, lawns/parks, and playgrounds, which are interactive spaces for markets, concerts, fitness, and pop-ups. The Vision Plan honors the Greek culture symbolically in color and pattern throughout the district, while at the same time responds to feedback from its many stakeholders.

Client

Greektown Preservation Society

Size

50 acres

Dates

2018 - 2019

Team

Skidmore Owings & Merrill
HR&A
Sam Schwartz Engineering
McIntosh Poris Associates
Kraemer Design Group





The vision plan identifies four potential public spaces: a triangular plaza at Monroe and Randolph streets that could be the “gateway” to Greektown, an area called “Clinton Park” near Gratiot Avenue, a park on the south side at Saint Antoine Street, and a pocket park off Beaubien Street.









