CONNECTING BROADWAY-FILLMORE

ARC607/URP581-582 - FALL 2021

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4.1
INTRODUCTION

In the Broadway Fillmore Triangle, open space is everywhere, but well-defined and intentionally designed public space such as parks and playgrounds are few and far between. The planned public spaces that do exist, such as community gardens and sidewalks, range from well-maintained to abandoned. The majority of open space is found in abandoned city-owned vacant lots that are the remnants of mass demolition, disinvestment, and decline in social capital throughout the twentieth century. The demolition of vacant buildings without the resources to rebuild left this neighborhood with abandoned lots on nearly every block, and in especially high concentrations south of Paderewski Drive and surrounding the Central Terminal. Where large swaths of area lack definition it is common to also see neglected road and sidewalk infrastructure, decline in social capital and perceived safety, and the perpetual deterioration of the community fabric. Without channeling investment into the neighborhood, this cycle could continue indefinitely.

"Where large swaths of area lack definition it is common to also see neglected road and sidewalk infrastructure, decline in social capital and perceived safety, and the perpetual deterioration of the community fabric"

However, after a long delay to rebuild what was lost, it is encouraging to see an early wave of entrepreneurs and developers who are showing an interest in the area and choosing to restore old buildings rather than demolish them. Significant planning initiatives for the development of public space are already underway and hold the potential to transform the community in a comprehensive way.

The following analysis of public space inquires about existing open spaces and how they are currently used or plan to be used, with a deeper exploration of vacant land. It takes a critical look at public transportation networks and the condition of sidewalk infrastructure. It also studies signs of trust and distrust and recognizes patterns or correlations of neighborhood eye-level structure. The analysis led to new findings about the built infrastructure and its relationship to the community's social capital. These discoveries can be used to guide future recommendations for the permanent use of open space. Early and frequent consultation with community leaders and residents through informal conversations, tours, workshops, surveys and tactical demonstrations will strengthen this research and reveal more insights to guide future planning efforts.

Fig. 4.1.A : Public space in front of Central Terminal (Photo by author)

4.2
OPEN SPACE

Developing an understanding of common definitions of open space and considering the types of open space that currently exist in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle inspired the definition as it is used throughout this section. Open space is defined here as, an open piece of land that is undeveloped (without buildings) or underutilized and is accessible to the public. In Broadway Fillmore, open space includes natural habitat, City of Buffalo Parks, a Historic Olmsted Corridor and an unrealized corridor spur, community gardens, a play area for children, grassy areas, paved areas and vacant lots. This typology was used in the map (Figure 1) to inform an understanding of the current quantity and distribution of each type of open space. Each typology is described in greater detail below.

4.2.1 NATURAL HABITAT

Natural Habitat is designed to make space for native plant communities and wildlife to thrive within the post-industrial urban landscape such as that surrounding the Central Terminal. In the study area, one outstanding example of natural habitat exists. The Urban Habitat Project (UHP) is a 3-acre area between Memorial Drive, Curtiss Street and Peckham Street, filled with native plant species, including pine trees, hawthorns, and meadow grasses and wildflowers that provide habitat for birds, bees and other wildlife[1]. The space can be used as an outdoor classroom, includes walking paths, and performs a range of ecological services for this neighborhood, including carbon sequestration, soil remediation, and stormwater management. The project was designed by Dave Majewski, the Principal of Sustainable Resources Group of Buffalo (SRG) as well as a founding member of the Fillmore Corridor Neighborhood Coalition and volunteer for the Central Terminal Restoration Corporation. For his design (Figure 4.2.B), Majewski won the Environmental Stewardship Award from the Nature Sanctuary Society of WNY in 2013 and the EPA's Environmental Quality Award in 2014[2].

4.2.2 CITY OF BUFFALO PARKS

City of Buffalo Parks include the ones identified on the City of Buffalo's Division of Parks and Recreation website. According to this site, there are over 180 parks and recreational facilities in the city. Four are located in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle. These include a small paved park at Paderewski Drive and Sears Street (Figure 4.2.C), a landscaped bed at Memorial Circle, and trees and a sculpture at Memorial Drive and Curtiss Street. Another park noted on the website is a wide corridor of grass running along the length of Memorial Drive[3]. None of these parks currently possess the intentionality or vitality of a frequently used and well-maintained city park.

4.2.3 HISTORIC OLMSTEAD CORRIDOR

An Historic Olmsted Corridor extends through the Broadway Fillmore Triangle. The historic map in Figure 4 identifies Fillmore Avenue as "Parkway," connecting the "Parade," known today as Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, with South Park. Paderewski Drive, from Fillmore Avenue

1. Byrd, Christopher, Chrissy Lincoln, Jeannine Pitas, Beth Potozniak, DJ Red, and Sarah Sutcliff. "Buffalo Rising: Urban Habitat Project- Looks Great, Functional Too." Broadway Fillmore Alive, September 16, 2012. https://broadwayfillmorealive.org/2.0/2012/09/buffalo-rising-urban-habitat-project-looks-great-functional-too/.
2. "Dave Majewski's Work on Urban Habitat Project Earns EPA Honors." Congressman Brian Higgins, January 16, 2015. https://higgins.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/dave-majewski-s-work-on-urban-habitat-project-earns-epa-honors-0.
3. Division of Parks & Recreation. City of Buffalo. Accessed October 9, 2021. https://www.buffalony.gov/332/Division-of-Parks-Recreation.

Fig. 4.2.A : Open Space Map

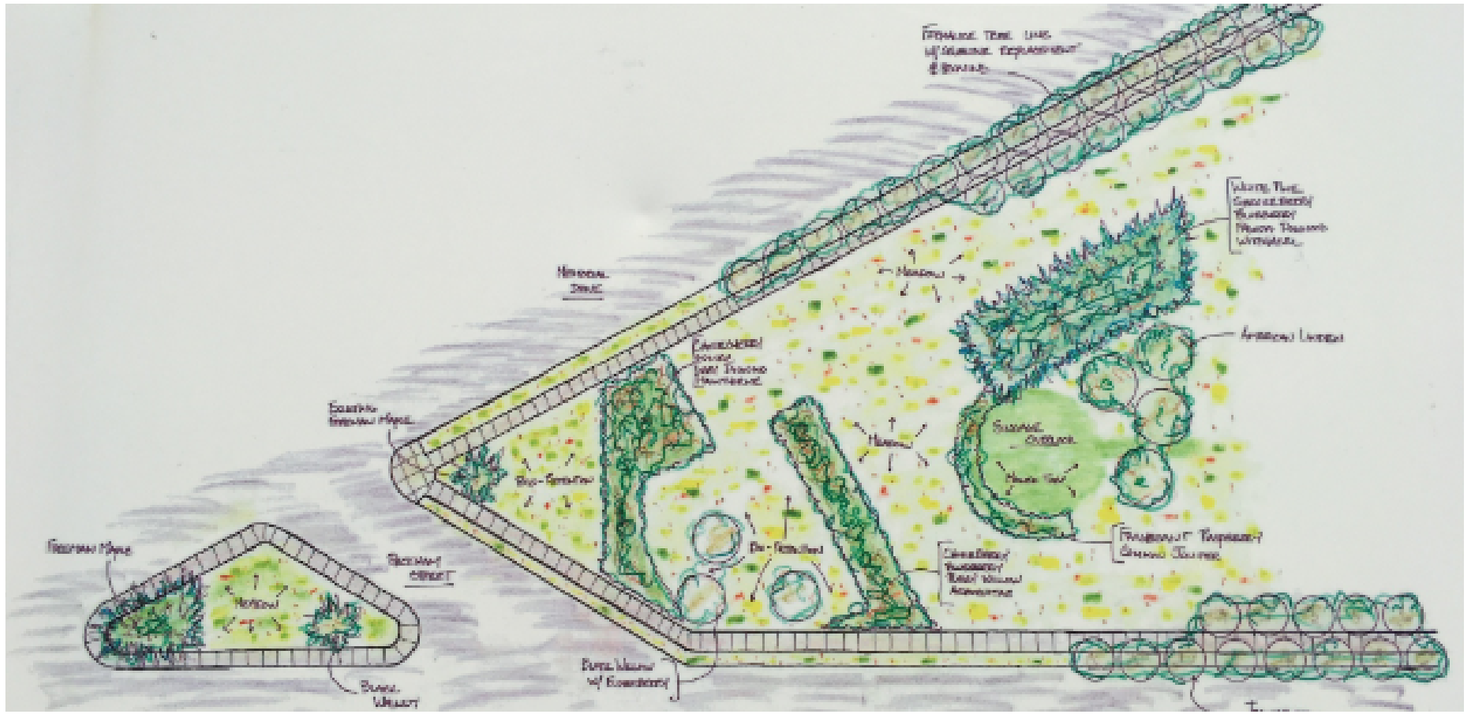

Fig. 4.2.B : Urban Habitat Project rendering by Dave Majewski (Photograph taken by Emma Cook from on-site interpretive

Fig. 4.2.C : Sears Paderewski Park (photo source: https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/rpa-org/pdfs/NCP-Buffalo.pdf)

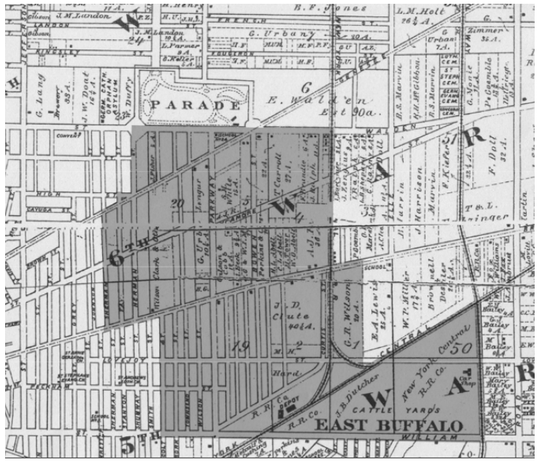

Fig. 4.2.D : Olmsted Parade and Parkway shown in a map from the 1880 Illustrated Historical Atlas of Erie County, NY (photo source: https://buffaloah.com/surveys/bf/Report-Sects.1,2,3,4,&6.pdf)

to Memorial Circle, is considered the gateway to the Central Terminal, and is an unrealized Olmsted Corridor spur. Olmsted Corridors were designed to be significantly broader than other city streets, at a width of 200 feet, and therefore could accommodate separate lanes for different modes of traffic. These corridors are also characterized by grassy areas planted with elms to create a park-like experience. Fillmore Avenue was designed by Olmsted in 1887 and was to have two rows of elms on each side of its broad parkway, however it was only partially completed[4]. Today, Fillmore Avenue pales in comparison to the iconic Lincoln, Chapin and Bidwell Parkways on the west side of Buffalo.

"Today, Fillmore Avenue pales in comparison to the iconic Lincoln, Chapin and Bidwell Parkways on the west side of Buffalo"

4.2.4 COMMUNITY GARDEN

Community Gardens in the study area include the Broadway Market Community Roof Garden, which was established in 2010 and offers individual garden plots (Figure 4.2.E). According to the Broadway Market's website, the roof space is open for the public to enjoy and is used for workshops and festivals[5]. Two other community gardens in this neighborhood were built by the local nonprofit organization Grassroots Gardens WNY, which has completed more than 100 projects across Buffalo. According to their website, the organization is guided by "the belief that a garden has the power to transform a neighborhood"[6]. The group builds gardens where a need has been expressed, but it is up to local community members to take ownership and maintain it. The Paderewski Community Garden, located near Memorial Circle at 400 Paderewski Drive, is listed as an ornamental garden and includes a small flower bed. The Lombard Clark Block Club garden at 71 Lombard Street is listed as a food producing garden, with five small raised beds planted with vegetables[6]. Both Grassroots Gardens

4. Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc. "Historic Resources Intensive Level Survey Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood ." City of Buffalo, August 2004. https://buffaloah.com/surveys/bf/ReportSects.1,2,3,4,&6.pdf.
5. Market, Broadway. "Roof Garden." The Broadway Market, April 20, 2020. https://broadwaymarket.org/roof-garden/.
6. "Home: Grassroots Gardens WNY." Grassroots Gardens. Accessed October 9, 2021. https://www.grassrootsgardens.org/.

Fig. 4.2.E : Broadway Market Community Roof Garden (photo taken by Emma Cook on Sept. 1 site visit)

could be enhanced with better signage and maintenance. A food producing community garden could offer opportunities for block club gatherings and programming such as educational workshops or harvest festivals.

4.2.5 PLAY AREAS FOR CHILDREN

Play Areas for Children are limited to one playground adjacent to the Matt Urban Center at 57 Reed Street. The Matt Urban Center is a not-for-profit organization that provides housing services and community services such as after-school programming7. The playground facility replaced a vacant lot in 2007. It was designed by Joy Kuebler Landscape Architect and built by volunteers through the United Way Day of Caring. It includes colorful play equipment, a deck, a gravel play area, planter boxes and fencing8. Its location at the north edge of the Broadway Fillmore Triangle places it outside of a ¼-mile radius walking distance for a large portion of residents, specifically those who live south of Paderewski Drive and east of Memorial Drive.

4.2.6 INITIATIVES TO REVITALIZE OPEN SPACE

Viewing the Broadway Fillmore Triangle through satellite imagery gives strangers a basic sense of the quantity and distribution of open space in this area. Analyzing Google street views and geospatial data informs a deeper understanding of the character of these spaces. Walking through the neighborhood and having conversations with leaders in the community reveals yet another perspective.
During a site visit and tour of the neighborhood on September 1, 2021, several local community leaders discussed open spaces. Business and organization leaders who have been in the area for many years shared their knowledge about the formal and informal uses of some of these spaces. For example, the Broadway Market Community Roof Garden is well organized and hosts small events, while the "Super Block" green space owned by Corpus Christi is used by residents as an informal public gathering space. Entrepreneurs who are choosing to invest in the area see vacant lots through a lens of opportunity. Some spoke of community needs, such as housing infill or play areas for daycare children, that could be addressed through the development of these spaces.
Significant planning initiatives are underway to address some of these needs. The redevelopment framework for the Broadway "International" Market includes activation of the surrounding sidewalks and enhancing the roof with green space and playing fields9. The Buffalo Central Terminal Master Plan identifies that one of its main goals is to create welcoming green spaces, with a proposed Great Lawn and Plaza providing flexible public spaces that will be activated through programming10. The Regional Plan Association has targeted the .28 acre Sears Paderewski Park as one of three pilot sites in its master plan for a city-wide park system. The currently abandoned and paved site was chosen due to factors such as high levels of poverty and diversity, poor health, and the need for green space in the area. The plan for this space includes a playground and pavilion11.
The abundance of open space in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle presents an exciting opportunity for this community. If designed and programmed in an intentional way and in response to residents' informal uses of space and their expressed needs, abandoned spaces will be a key to revitalizing the neighborhood.
Triangle presents an exciting opportunity for this community. If designed and programmed in an intentional way and in response to residents' informal uses of space and their expressed needs, abandoned spaces will be a key to revitalizing the neighborhood.

4 Citation (Chicago Style)

7. "Youth & Family Services." Matt Urban Center. Accessed October 9, 2021. http://urbanctr.org/community-services/youth-family-services/.
8. Ryan, MIchelle. "Day of Caring." Landscape Architect. Accessed October 9, 2021. https://landscapearchitect.com/landscape-articles/lasn-stewardship-october-2007.

4.3
VACANCY & OWNERSHIP

The Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood has experienced a lot of disinvestment and demolition over the past several years. In 1955, demolition of vacant buildings within the area began and would continue throughout the 2000s. It's critical to think about this vacant land when discussing open-space because it is a type of open space that needs immediate intervention. There may be some parcels that have abandoned infrastructure and others that have open land with no built structures due to demolition. Regardless, the high amount of vacant property influences outsider's perspectives of this area. This results in people viewing this area poorly, therefore causing less infill development and less investment. Analyzing land ownership and vacancy ownership needs to be discussed when determining what is best for the community and how to move forward with a plan.

4.3.1 LAND OWNERSHIP

Figure 4.3.A is a map that shows all land ownership within the Broadway-Fillmore Triangle. All the red parcels are owned by the City of Buffalo and all other colored parcels of orange, green, pink, purple, yellow, and blue are owned by six other property owners who own ten or more properties within this area. All other property owners who own less than 10 properties are shown in gray. Figure 4.3.B also shows the City of Buffalo's ownership when compared to all other land owners. Out of the 1,058 properties in this triangle, the City of Buffalo owns 308, accounting for 29.11% of the total land in the area. Other land owners who own more than 10 properties only account for 8.13% of the total land in this area.

4.3.2 VACANCY

More notable is how much of this land is vacant property. 4.3.D shows a map of all vacant land owned in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle. Consistent with Figure 4.3.A, red parcels are owned by the City of Buffalo. Yellow and blue parcels represent land owners six and seven respectively. Dark gray is used to show all other vacant land owners. Figure 4.3.D exhibits the relationship between the amount of vacant land the City of Buffalo owns compared to all other land owners. Out of 480 vacant properties, the City of Buffalo owns 301, accounting for 62.71% of all vacant land in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle. Out of the 308 properties the City of Buffalo owns, 301 are vacant properties and only 7 are considered not vacant. All 480 vacant properties account for 45.37% of the total land in this area.

4.3.3 TAKE AWAYS

More notable is how much of this same land is actually just vacant property. 4.3.C shows a map of all vacant land owned in the Broadway-Fillmore Triangle. Consistent with Figure 4.3.A, all red parcels are owned by the City of Buffalo. Yellow and Blue also represent land owners six and seven respectively. Dark gray is used to show all other vacant land owners. Figure 4.3.B exhibits the relationship between the amount of vacant land the City of Buffalo owns compared to all other land owners. Out of 480 vacant properties, the City of Buffalo owns 301, accounting for 62.71% of all vacant land in the Broadway-Fillmore Triangle. Out of the 308 properties the City of Buffalo owns, 301 are vacant properties and only 7 are considered not vacant. All 480 vacant properties accounts for 45.37% of the total land in this area.

Fig. 4.3.A : Land Ownership Map

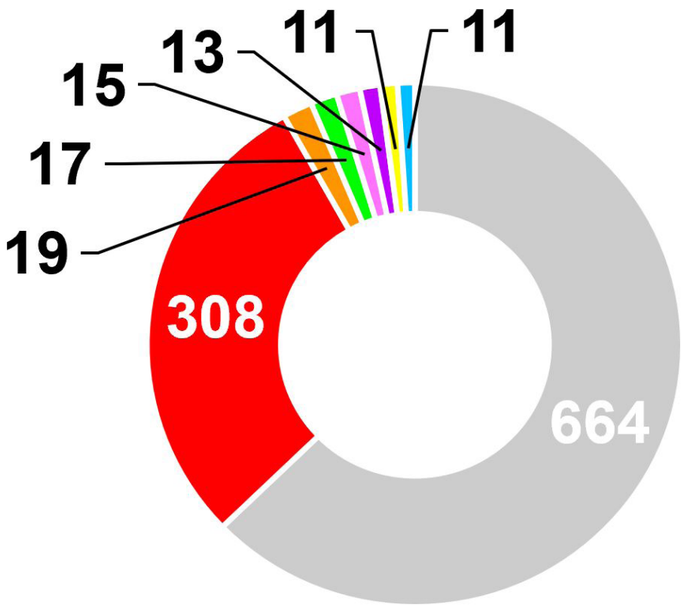

Fig. 4.3.B. Land Ownership data chart (source: author)

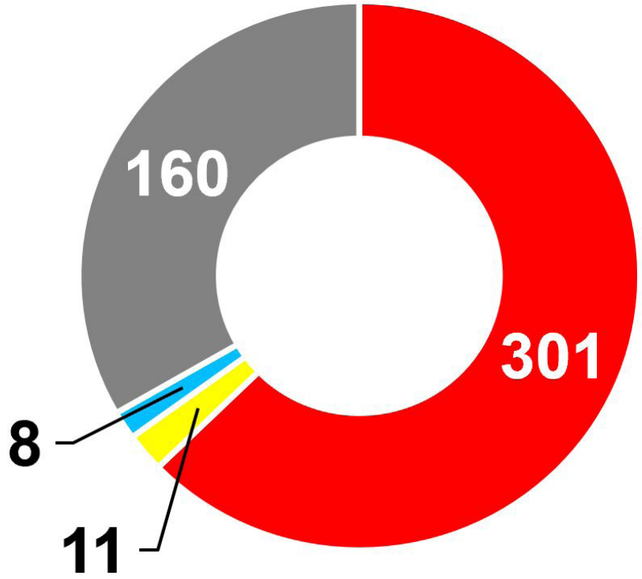

Fig. 4.3.C : Vacant Land Ownership data chart (source: author)

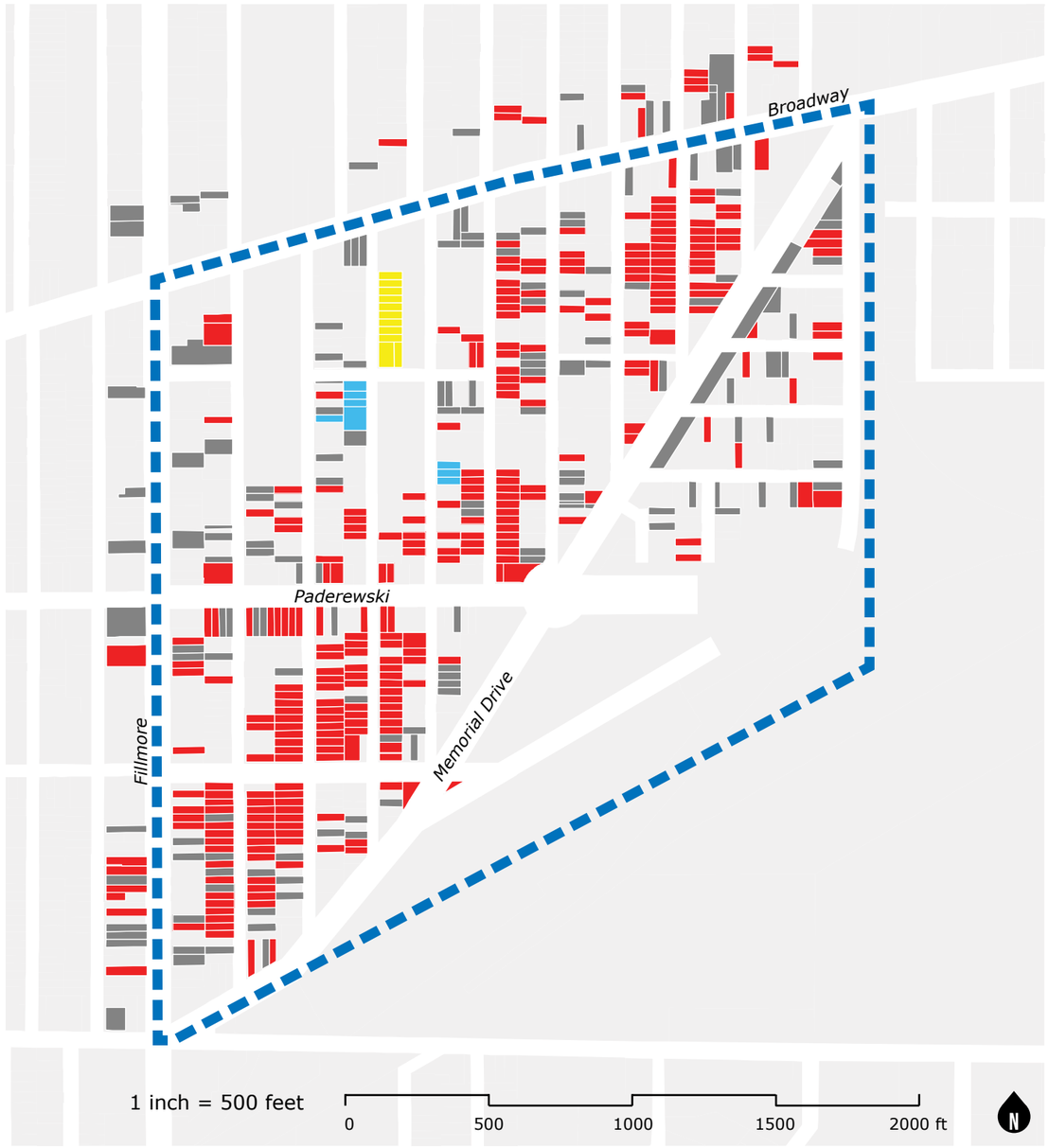

Fig. 4.3.D : Vacant Land Ownership Map

4.4
TRANSPORTATION

As the population in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle grows and diversifies, an immediate need is to improve transportation networks that better serve residents and visitors. Currently, residents in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle commute by biking, walking, bus, carpooling, or personal vehicles. According to the American Census Survey, personal vehicles are the most common mode of transportation, while biking is least common. This neighborhood has wide streets designed primarily for automobiles. To facilitate the ease of movement to and from homes, commercial corridors, grocers, places of worship, and recreational areas, it is necessary to strengthen the infrastructure that supports travel by bus and bicycle.

4.4.1 NFTA BUS

Two NFTA Primary/Core bus routes serve this neighborhood. On weekdays, Bus Route 4- Broadway runs on a time interval of approximately every 20 minutes, while Route 23- Fillmore-Hertel has a frequency of approximately every 25 minutes. At the southern edge of the neighborhood, Route 1- William crosses Fillmore Avenue and runs less frequently, at approximately 30-minute intervals[9].

According to the NFTA's 2021 Metro Performance report, bus ridership for Route 23- Fillmore-Hertel is notably high compared with that of other routes in the city. It was in the top 5 out of 76 routes across the city in 2020 and 2021. Route 23 had over 1,250,000 passengers in 2020 and due to the Covid-19 pandemic the number of passengers dropped to approximately 700,000 in 2021. In comparison, Route 4- Broadway had about 750,000 passengers in 2020 and approximately 450,000 in 2021. [10]

4.4.2 CYCLING

The growing popularity of biking as a viable means of commuting also benefits local air quality and improves human health and wellbeing. The Buffalo-based organization Shared Mobility, Inc., in partnership with Independent Health, provides 400 bikes at 90 stations across the Buffalo and Niagara Falls region. One station is located in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle at the Broadway Market on the corner of Broadway Avenue and Gibson Street[11].

Standard bike lanes are found on both sides of Broadway Street and Fillmore Avenue, but currently the paint has faded to barely visible on the East side of Fillmore and the lanes on both sides of the street end abruptly approximately 250 miles North of William Street. These lanes are designated for bike use only, but are not buffered from vehicle traffic. Internal streets in this neighborhood do not have bike lanes. Memorial Drive is well suited for bike lanes based on its Bike Level of Service (BLOS) score. BLOS is a standard measure of bicyclist comfort based on a road's geometry and traffic conditions. At fifty feet wide, Memorial Drive has "Extremely High" bike lane compatibility north of Paderewski Drive, and "Very High" compatibility on the segment south of Paderewski Drive due to slightly higher volumes of traffic. An internal residential street, such as Gibson Street, scored at a

9 NFTA. "Route Schedules." Metro Bus & Rail. Accessed October 9, 2021. https://metro.nfta.com/schedules/routes.
10 NFTA-Metro. "FY 2021 Metro Performance," March 2021. https://www.nfta.com/media/l2pexzou/2021_performance_report.pdf.
11 Shared Mobility Inc., "Reddy Bikeshare," Home: Reddy Bikeshare, 2020, https://reddybikeshare.socialbicycles.com/

Fig. 4.3.A : Transportation Map

Fig. 4.3.B : Parking area for Broadway market (source: author)

Fig. 4.3.C : NFTA-Metro-Bus-Rail-2 (source: author)

Fig. 4.3.D : Biking with Reddy Bikes at Niagara Falls (source: author)

"Adopting design concepts that align with “Complete Streets” could make streets in this neighborhood more cyclist-friendly and walkable"

“Moderately High” level of bike lane compatibility[12].

4.4.3 ANALYSIS

Adopting design concepts that align with “Complete Streets” could make streets in this neighborhood more cyclist-friendly and walkable. Pedestrian safety is a concern, especially on wide streets and ones with higher speed limits.

The street hierarchy in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle includes local streets and connectors. The north-south connector, Fillmore Avenue, carries traffic to MLK Jr. Park to the north and proceeds north to merge with the arterial Route 5, Main Street. In the southward direction, Fillmore Avenue carries traffic to Interstate Highway 190. An east-west connector, Broadway Street, carries traffic west to Niagara Square in downtown Buffalo, and it carries traffic eastward, away from downtown, eventually becoming arterial Route 20. Local roads within the Broadway Fillmore Triangle form a grid pattern and mainly serve local automobile traffic.

New streetscaping could include highly visible crosswalks, traffic calming features like raised intersections, safety considerations like lighting, and better sidewalk conditions, all of which are currently needed in this community. Public transportation networks in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle can be improved to make it more convenient for residents and visitors alike to choose options other than automobiles to travel between homes, places of employment, commercial corridors, and local landmarks scattered throughout the neighborhood.

12. Barsotti, Ed. “Bicycle Level of Service Calculator Form.” Ride Illinois, October 20, 2016. https://rideillinois.org/blos/blosform.htm.

4.5
SIDEWALK CONDITION

In addition to cycling and taking the bus, another important mode of transportation is walking. To allow for safe, convenient pedestrian travel, sidewalk infrastructure should be well-connected and well-maintained. In addition to serving those who are passing through, sidewalks also contribute in a significant way to neighborhood character by encouraging people to stop and explore, thereby creating more street activity. When a pedestrian walks down a Buffalo street and comes across brick buildings, large murals, the "bubble man" blowing bubbles out of his apartment window, or the green flames on Old Pink's façade, that person knows that they're in the art district, Allentown. Street vitality gives neighborhoods their unique character.

In the Broadway Fillmore Triangle, five typologies of sidewalk were defined in order to study their condition. Research was done using Google Earth Street View and findings can be seen in the map in Figure 4.5.F. The first typology is sidewalks that are in "good condition," which includes ones without cracks or tripping hazards, with a trimmed landscape along its edges and enough space for two pedestrians to cross paths comfortably. The chart in Figure 4.5.F shows that 50% of the sidewalks surveyed are currently in good condition. The second category is sidewalks that are in "medium condition," which have few cracks and no tripping hazards, partially trimmed landscape, and enough space for two pedestrians to pass each other comfortably. Thirty-seven percent of surveyed sidewalks fall into the medium condition category.

Areas of greater concern fell into the next three typologies. The third category, "poor condition," includes sidewalks with major cracks, tripping hazards, neglected landscape, and insufficient space for two pedestrians to pass each other. Sidewalks in poor condition make up 10% of sidewalks surveyed. The fourth category is "no sidewalks," where there is no paved path designated for pedestrians. Areas lacking a sidewalk makeup 3% of the area surveyed. Finally, the fifth category is "obstruction" and occurs anywhere that a pedestrian is forced to walk off of the sidewalk. At the time of survey, sidewalk obstructions occur in two locations in the study area, caused by overgrown vegetation along Paderewski Drive and ongoing construction on Playter Street.

Analysis of sidewalk condition in relation to ownership reveals that privately-owned parcels typically have better maintained, "good condition" sidewalk. This is the case in the section of neighborhood east of Memorial Drive, where short streets like Dover, Geneva, Concord and Newton are entirely privately-owned residential blocks and therefore very walkable. However, sidewalks adjacent to city-owned parcels on Paderewski Street and Peckham Street typically fall into the "medium condition" typology. Along city-owned vacant property, especially surrounding the Central Terminal, sidewalks are in "poor condition." Therefore, it is logical to conclude that short blocks with privately-owned parcels and no vacancy typically have the best maintained sidewalks in this neighborhood, and in turn, the character of these streets feels safer and more comfortable. It is also worth noting that the commercial corridors along Broadway Street and Fillmore Avenue have mostly well-maintained sidewalks that fall into the "good condition" category. Restaurants, grocery stores, pharmacies and other businesses along these streets bring more foot traffic to the area.

Fig. 4.5.A : Good Condition sidewalk (photo source- Google Streetview)

Fig. 4.5.B : Medium Condition sidewalk (photo source- Google Streetview)

Fig. 4.5.C : Bad Condition sidewalk (photo source- Google Streetview)

Fig. 4.5.B : No sidewalk (photo source- Google Streetview)

Fig. 4.5.C : Obstruction (photo source- Google Streetview)

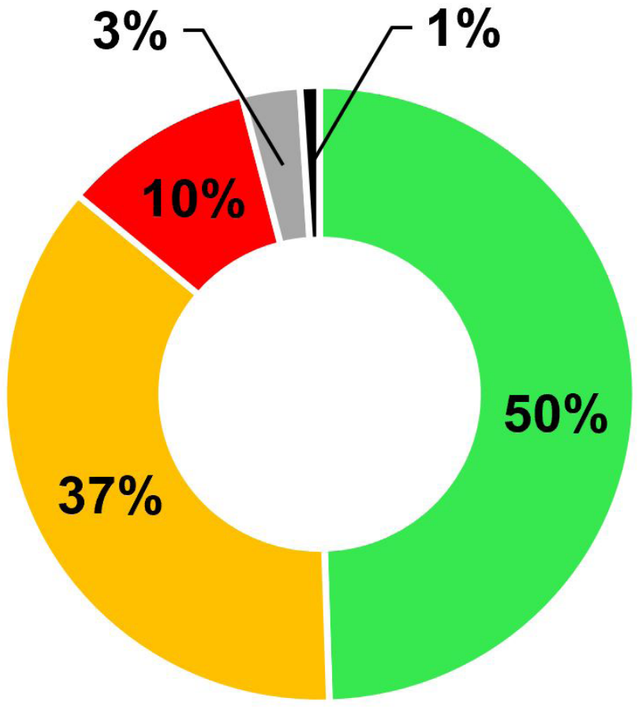

Fig. 4.5.E : Sidewalk condition data chart (source: author)

Fig. 4.5.F : Side Walk Condition Map

4.6
TRUST DISTRUST

Planners and architects have become conscientious of the importance of social infrastructure as they strive to advance more sustainable and thriving communities. Inadequate built environments are a major cause for the decay of civilian wellbeing, health, safety, community participation, income equality, and trust in government. City data points towards the weakening of the city's social fabric since the 1960s, when deindustrialization and suburbanization led to a shrinking population, sprawl, reliance on automobiles, and less focus on shared public space. These factors encouraged people to spend more time in their homes in isolation, to the detriment of the community. Signs of the decline of social capital are found in many urban environments, including the Broadway Fillmore Triangle. Site visit and Google Earth Street View observations of trust and distrust are a first step in understanding and mitigating the downward trend in trust. The analysis reveals disparities within the neighborhood, some of which correlate with the condition of the built environment.

The map in Figure 4.6.H shows the distribution of trust in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle. Four typologies were defined based on the relationship between signs of personalization and signs of trust and distrust. The hypothesis is that higher levels of personalization, especially when combined with easy physical and visual access, could indicate higher levels of trust.

4.6.1 HIGH LEVELS OF TRUST

The first category includes high levels of personalization with full or partial visual and physical access. Markers of such personalization include, well-manicured gardens, potted plants, light fixtures, toys, street furniture, shared facilities and distinct entrances or thresholds. To be considered under this category, the land parcels should have a distinct boundary but without a fence or barrier that inhibits movement from one side to the other. In residential areas, the optimum width of streets that encourage trust and personalization is between 10-15 feet. Areas identified within this category show positive and progressive community growth with discernible signs of ownership of the neighborhood. Hence, these areas suggest stability. Positive change within even two parcels could be a catalyst for a significant rise in levels of trust along a street segment, nudging other residents in the community to emulate this trend. Figure 4.6.B shows that high levels of trust are found in only 3% of the area surveyed, and are most commonly found in the short blocks east of Memorial Drive.

4.6.2 MEDIUM LEVELS OF TRUST

Land parcels belonging to this category show moderate levels of trust with some signs of personalization but lower levels of visual and physical accessibility. Such land parcels are pushing towards community advancement and growth with great potential for social infrastructure. In the case of residential units, this could result in low levels of fencing, usually with higher levels of visual access. Some of the objects of personalization include, but are not limited to, well-kept gardens, hedges, balconies, fixtures and furniture. The width of streets may vary, but overgrown vegetation is common along such streets. Thirty percent of the parcels surveyed display characteristics of medium levels of trust and personalization.

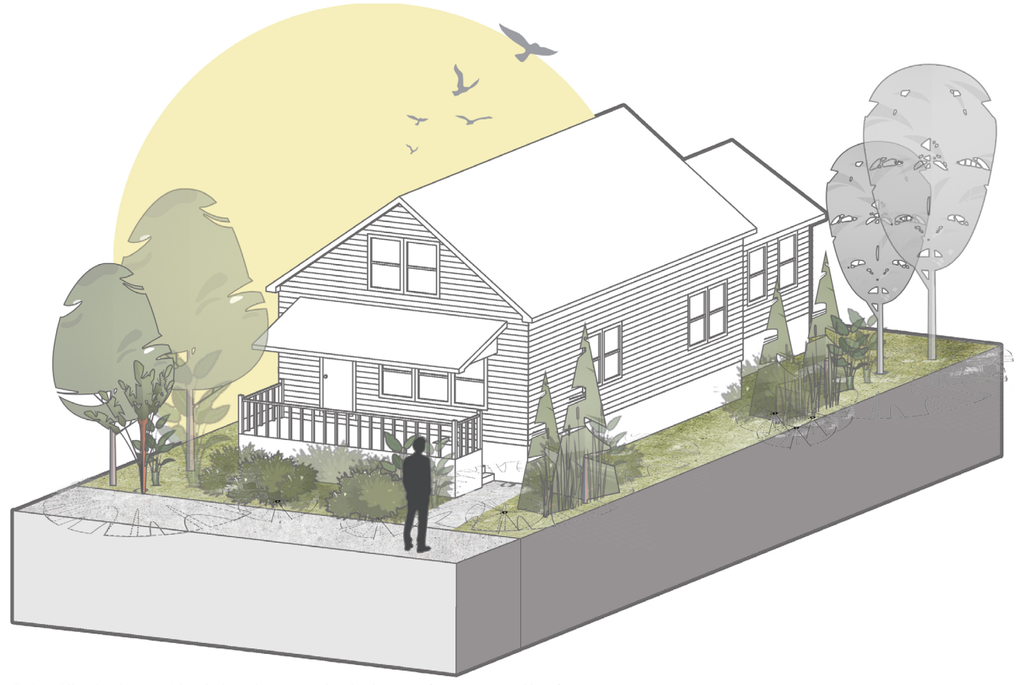

Fig. 4.6.A : Illustration of high trust in residential area (source- author)

Fig. 4.6.B : Illustration of medium trust in residential area (source- author)

4.6.3 LOW LEVELS OF TRUST

One of the major signs used in this category is high fencing with limited or no visual and physical connection. This shows lack of trust and engagement with others in the neighborhood. There is poor communication or connection between the parcel and the street and between parcels. Vegetation is used in this case to further limit connectivity with the streets. These parcels thrive and exist independent of each other and hence need community level interventions to further bolster development. The width of streets is a characteristic of this category as well, with a typical dimension ranging from 20-30 feet. Although there could be signs of personalization, they are not visible and hence not part of the streetscape. Signs of low levels of trust occur in 9% of the area surveyed.
This category includes undefined vacant land parcels or occupied land parcels with built structures and

"Unkempt front yards and lack of personal belongings, furniture, lighting or streetscape features indicate poor and decaying neighborhoods that need attention from authorities and planners"

4.6.4 NO TRUST

This category includes undefined vacant land parcels or occupied land parcels with built structures and no signs of habitation. Unkempt front yards and lack of personal belongings, furniture, lighting or streetscape features indicate poor and decaying neighborhoods that need attention from authorities and planners. These characteristics are often observed in areas that also have poor sidewalk conditions and infrequent pedestrian traffic. In the Broadway Fillmore Triangle, land parcels under this category make up the majority, or 58%, of the area. Signs of no trust and no personalization are typically found close to abandoned buildings, including the Central Terminal and surrounding area, indicating a possible correlation between trust and frequent regular use of spaces.

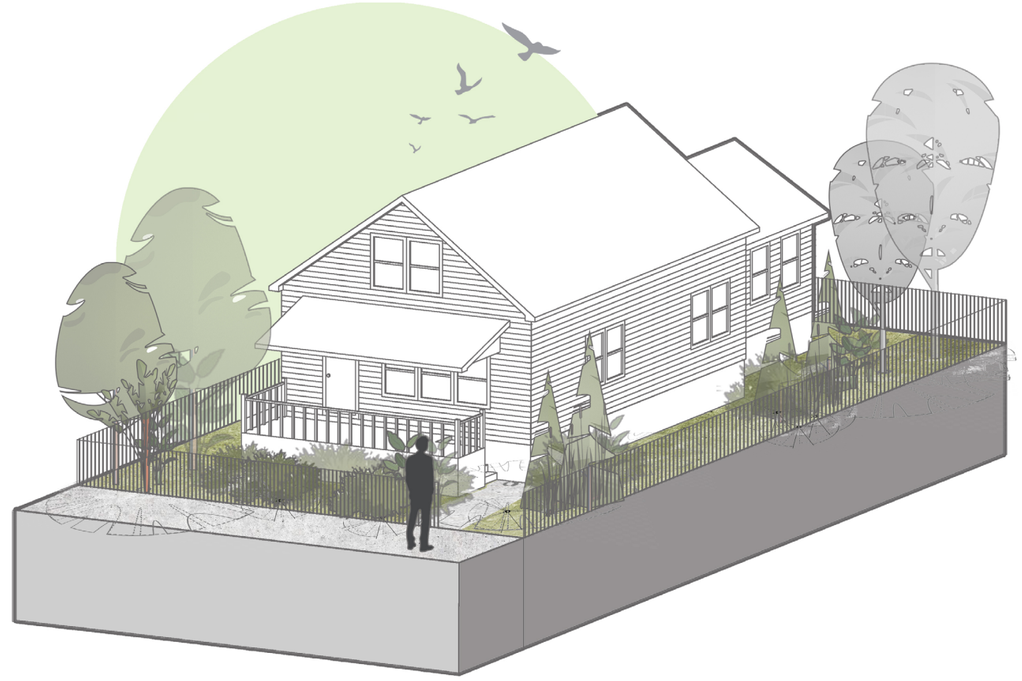

Fig. 4.6.C : Illustration of low trust in residential area (source- author)

Fig. 4.6.D : Illustration of no trust in residential area (source- author)

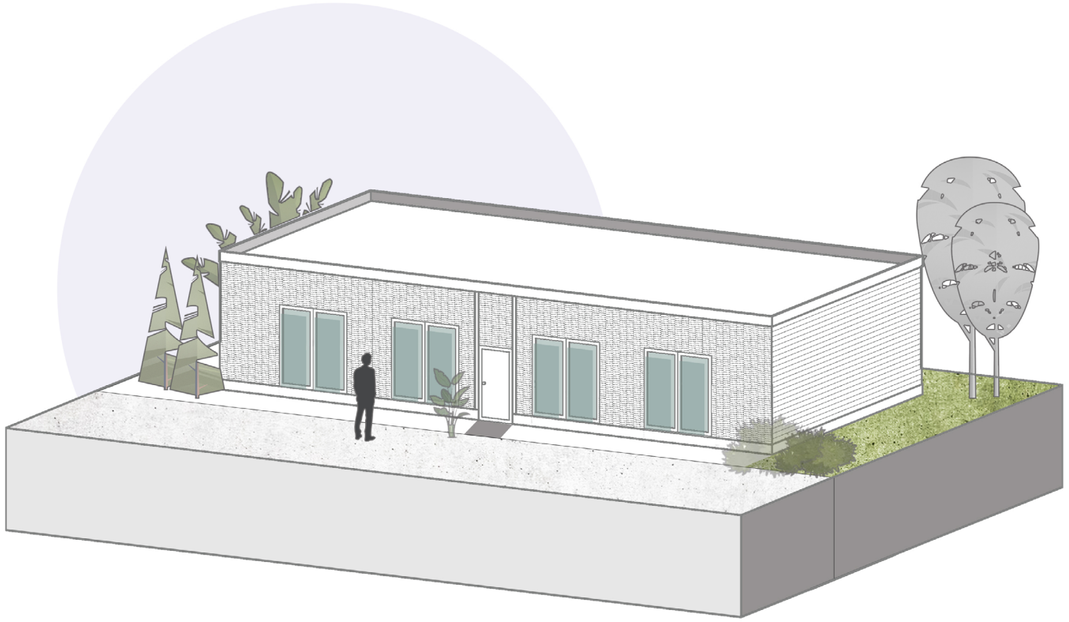

Fig. 4.6.E : Illustration of medium trust in commercial area (source- author)

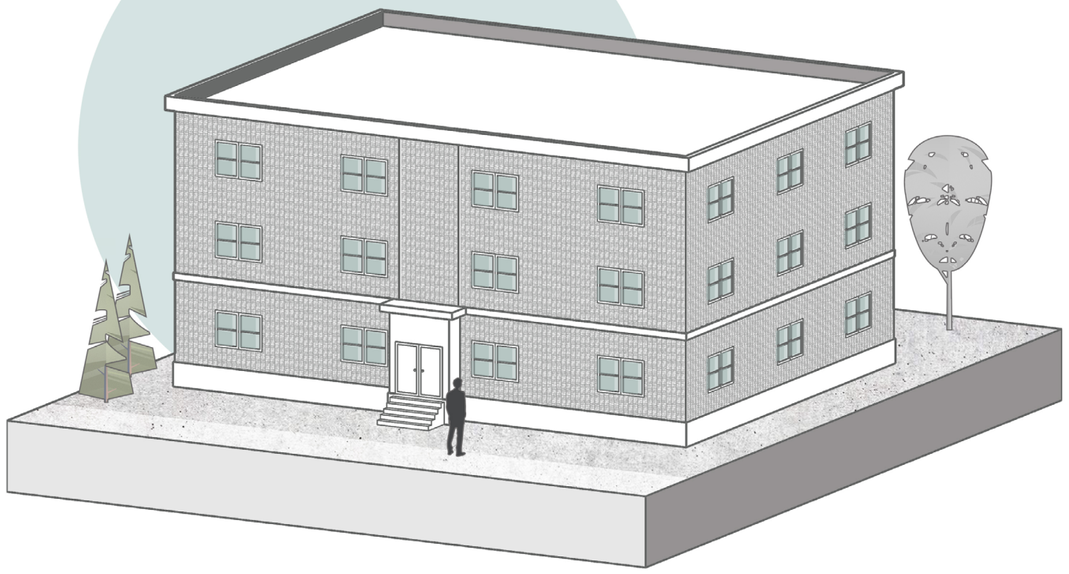

Fig. 4.6.F : Illustration of low trust in commercial area (source- author)

"Parks can also amplify this behavior (of trust) by acting as a catalyst to developing trust in the neighborhood"

4.6.5 MEDIUM LEVELS OF TRUST (COMMERCIAL)

Commercial/ mixed use land parcels in this area mostly fall under this category. They show moderate levels of trust with minor signs of personalization. Visual and physical access to such buildings/ lots are not rare. Signs of personalization include temporary or permanent awnings, outdoor furniture, full length windows/ openings, porous facades, welcome boards and markers. Street connectivity and allowances for interaction are key factors of this category. Similar to the residential area, trust here is also contagious. It is a general pattern on Broadway street to find rows of commercial units adjacent to each other with medium levels of trust. Parks can also amplify this behavior by acting as a catalyst to developing trust in the neighborhood.

4.6.6 NO TRUST (COMMERCIAL)

It is interesting to note that there is a direct correlation between signs of trust, number of openings, ownership, vacancy and connection with the street. If the facade is semi-permeable with visual access, there is a general upward trend in signs of trust and personalization. However, imposing and huge facades with minimum or no openings significantly reduce chances of interaction and thereby trust. Verticality of buildings also have a similar effect on the social fabric of the area. Low rise buildings strategically designed for inside-outside relations create a healthy and thriving environment for the community. Commercial buildings directly opening into parking areas have restricted access points without free inflow of pedestrian traffic. Streets that are devoid of vegetation or trees also do not encourage interactive or trustful behaviour amongst people.

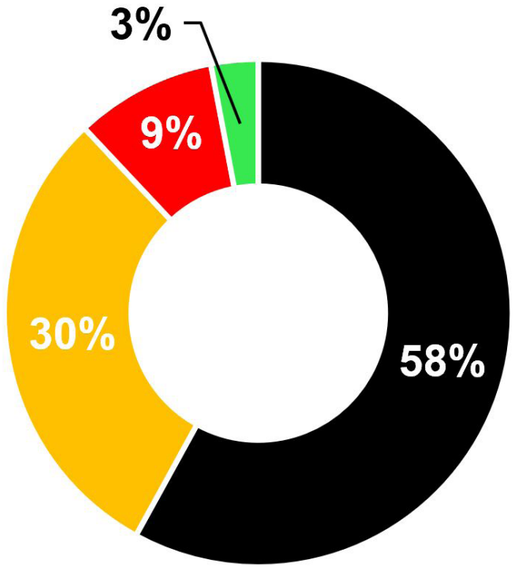

Fig. 4.5.G : Sidewalk condition data chart (source: author)

Fig. 4.5.H : High Trust, No fencing and Personalization (source: author)

Fig. 4.5.I : High Trust, No fencing and Personalization (source: author)

Fig. 4.5.J : Medium Trust, Low height fencing (source: author)

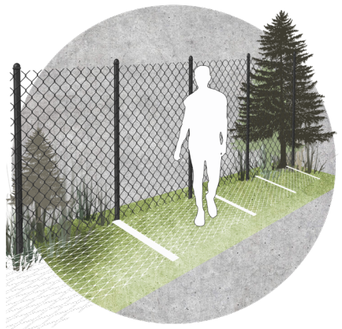

Fig. 4.5.K : Medium Trust, Transparent fencing (source: author)

Fig. 4.5.L : Low Trust, High, opaque fencing (source: author)

Fig. 4.5.M : Low Trust, Dilapidated fencing (source: author)

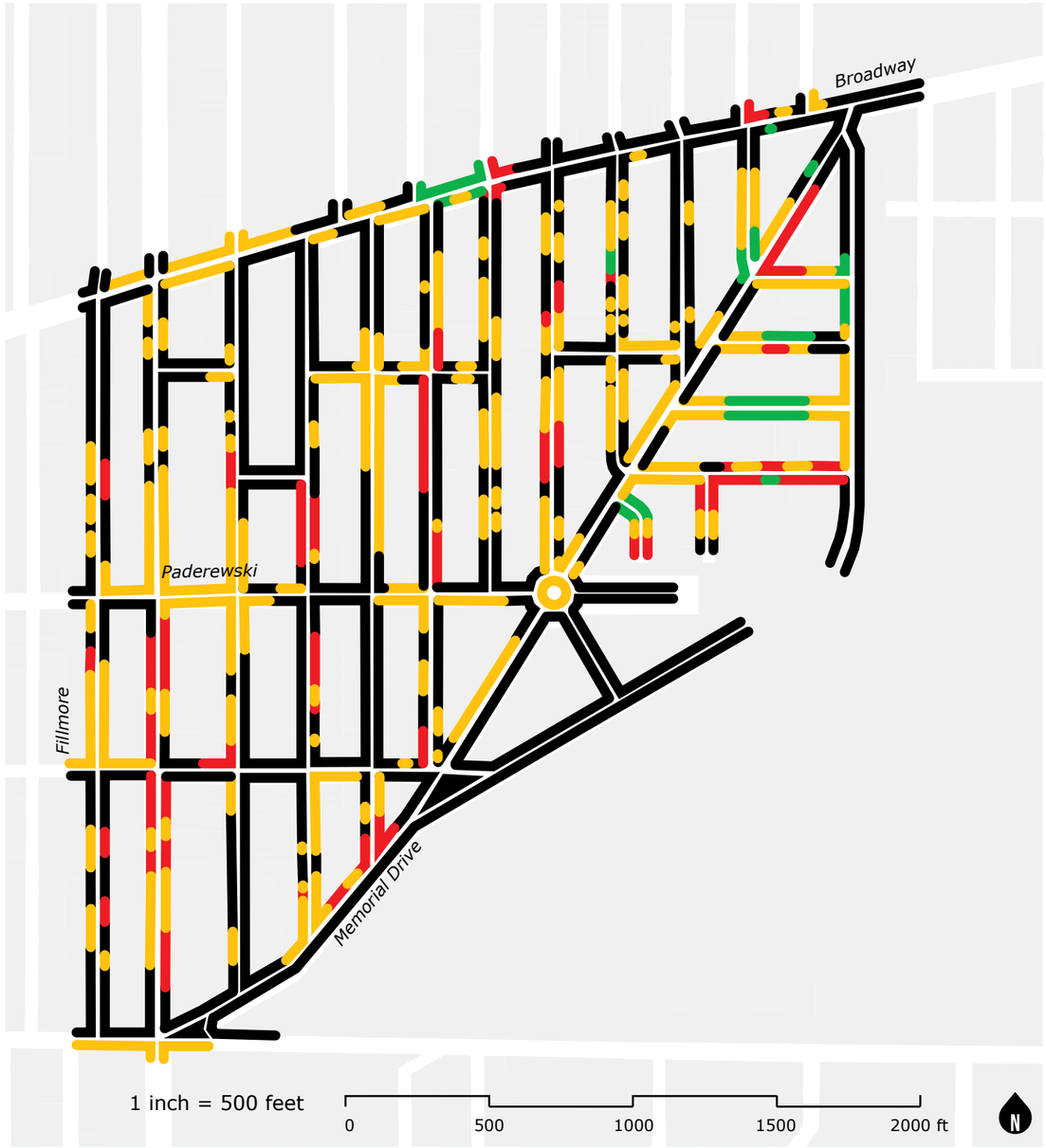

Fig. 4.6.N : Signs of Trust and Distrust Map

4.7
NEIGHBORHOOD EYE-LEVEL STRUCTURE

The eye level structure aims to capture the overall human experience of the Broadway Fillmore Triangle based on sidewalk condition and levels of trust and distrust as they are distributed throughout the neighborhood. Three categories, or zones, are used to understand conditions found at eye level (Figure 4.7.A). Areas that have high levels of trust and good sidewalks fall into the "Stability" category. "Attention" describes zones with medium levels of trust and medium sidewalk conditions. "Intervention" includes zones with low levels of trust and poor sidewalks. Looking at where these categories fall spatially and in relation to the neighborhood's major nodes and corridors, reveals overarching patterns as seen in the conceptual diagram in Figure 4.7.B.

Stability is concentrated in the small triangle of short, residential blocks east of Memorial Drive, just north of the Central Terminal. Attention is needed in the largely residential areas located centrally in this neighborhood. The area south of Paderewski Drive exhibits characteristics that need the most immediate intervention. Nodes are distributed mainly throughout the northwest and southeast corners of the Triangle, but there is not a major corridor running in this direction. A northwest-southeast corridor would run through the large "Attention" zone and therefore would require improvements. A closer look at sidewalk connectivity and vacant land could provide inspiration for targeted infrastructure improvements and reimagined streetscapes or establishment of green corridors with multi-use paths connecting the Broadway Market in the northwest with the Central Terminal in the southeast.

4.7.1 CONCLUSION

The analysis of public space in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle reinforces a number of important takeaways. Walkable streets create the kind of activity and liveliness that build neighborhood character. Outward expressions of trust and personalization are contagious from neighbor to neighbor. Vibrant public places improve quality of life for residents. In essence, connectivity builds community. If designed well, public spaces can play a significant role in connecting people to each other, while also providing connections with nature, recreation and play. To meet the needs of a growing and diversifying population, developing a strategy for the best use and design of open space must be done with the greatest care and intentionality, including ongoing consultation with community leaders and residents. There is great potential to turn undefined open spaces into great public spaces.

Nowhere is this neighborhood's untapped potential more obvious than in its vacant land. The Broadway Fillmore Triangle has 480 vacant properties, making up nearly half of the total area of this neighborhood. The City of Buffalo owns the majority of these properties, many of which are small plots of open space. In simple terms, if these many open spaces were well designed and connected, people would feel inspired to use them. The analysis of public space addressed some, but not all, of the factors that determine whether a public space works or does not. The next step might be to take inspiration from the work of William H. Whyte and Project for Public Spaces, who have contributed heavily to the subject of building

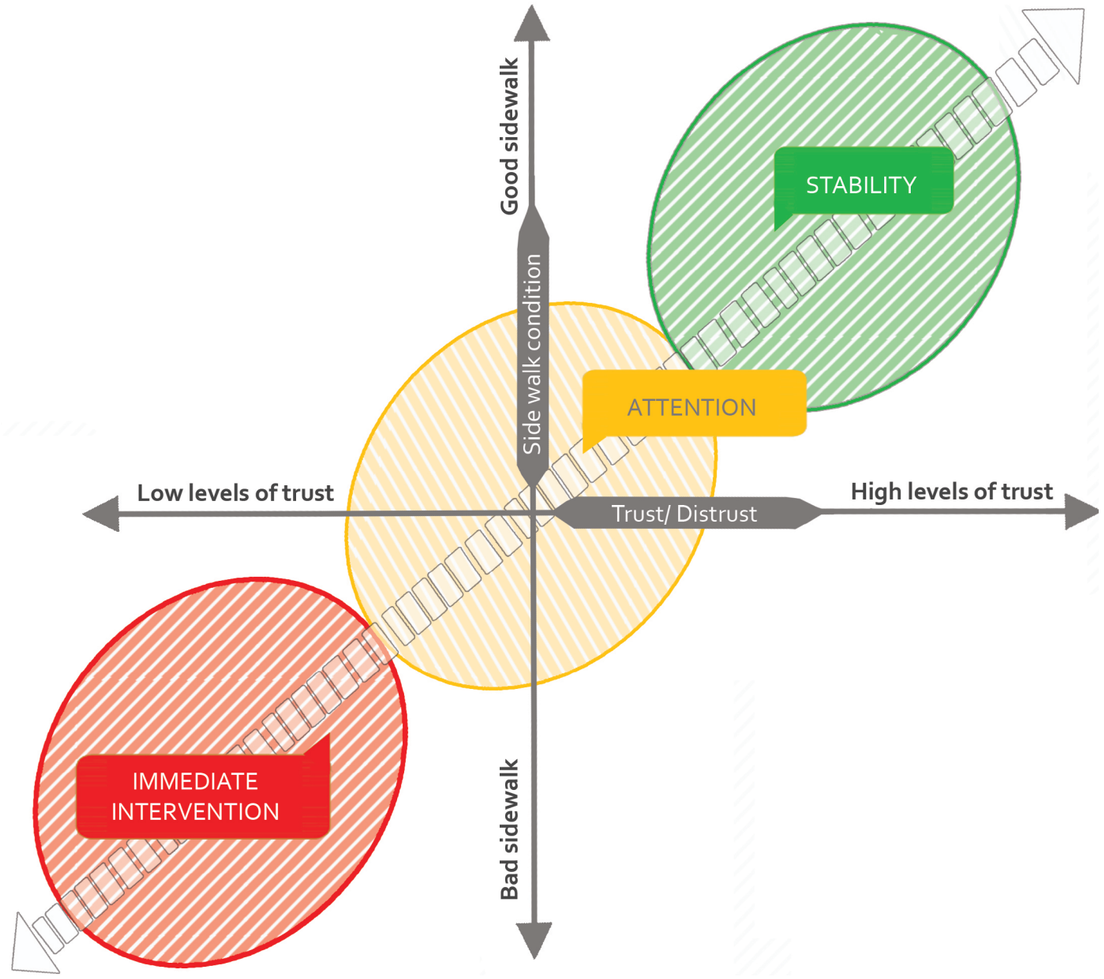

Fig. 4.7.A : Graph representing understanding of different categories based on sidewalk condition and levels of trust and distrust

successful public spaces. Extensive observations of human behavior and interactions in small public spaces have helped them identify a list of factors that make public spaces successful.

A plaza, for example, should have some combination of comfortable seating, tree canopy, water features, public art and food vendors. Easy access and the relationship between street and plaza is crucial to attract passersby. On the other hand, factors that may lead to a space's failure include being located next to buildings that lack transparency, the absence of shops, streets that do not accommodate pedestrians, and not achieving critical mass. Planning for a sufficient number of desirable features while avoiding negative ones can better the chances of a place's success.[13]

Great public spaces are achievable in the Broadway Fillmore Triangle. Vacant lots, poorly maintained infrastructure, and forgotten

"To meet the needs of a growing and diversifying population, developing a strategy for the best use and design of open space must be done with the greatest care and intentionality, including ongoing consultation with community leaders and residents"

initiatives can be revived through the development of parks and playgrounds, community gardens, green corridors and parkways, and complete streets for bus, bike and pedestrian travel. The neighborhood's best places should be public and free for all to enjoy.

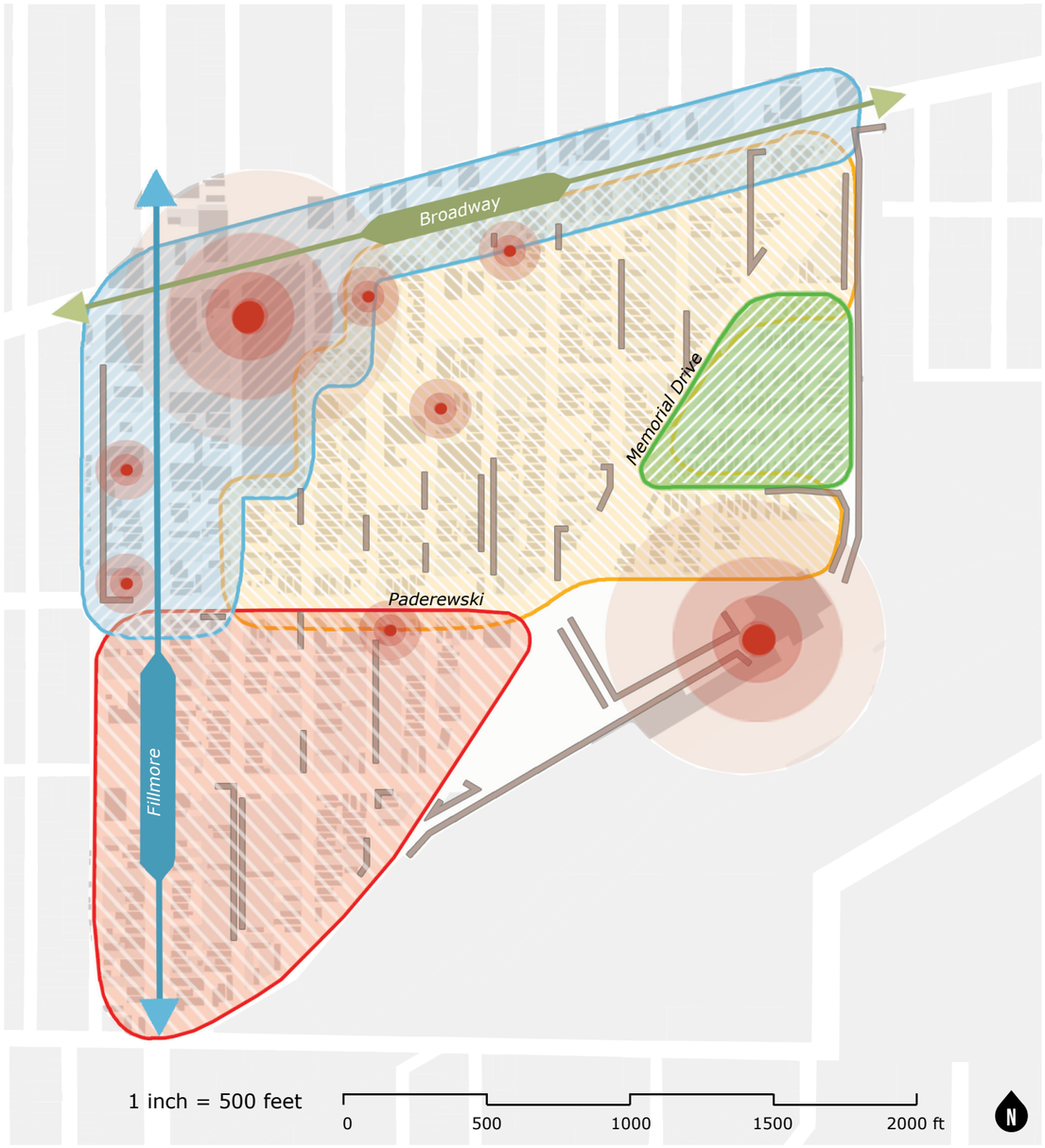

Fig. 4.7.B : Neighborhood Structure Eye-Level Map

13 Whyte, William H., Jr. The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces. Washington, D.C.: Conservation Foundation, 1980

STRENGTHS

- A recent wave of entrepreneurs and business leaders have already started projects that fill vacant space and rehab existing buildings
- Ongoing planning initiatives incorporate park space, green infrastructure, and sustainability
- Short streets have established higher levels of trust between neighbors

WEAKNESSES

- Poor transportation infrastructure including poor sidewalk conditions
- Reliance on automobile
- Weakened social ties and signs of distrust
- History of disinvestment and demolition
- Shortage of well-designed and maintained open space, including playgrounds and parks

OPPORTUNITIES

- Determining permanent uses for vacant lots
- Attracting developers to the area
- Increasing community engagement
- Providing incentives for home improvements
- Building trust between neighbors
- Investing in infrastructure and streetscaping for multimodal transportation options, and to improve street vitality
- Designing corridors of green space

THREATS

- Gentrification of area as vacant space is developed and property values increase
- Littering, vandalism and crime in vacant lots
- Development leading to more paved, impervious surface area