

Economic Development

State of Michigan Awards Grants to Enhance New Center Streetscapes

On August 16 the State of Michigan made an investment in the future of New Center by awarding the City of Detroit not one but **two** grants to enhance New Center public spaces. These grants, called TEA-21 Enhancement grants, are awarded competitively to communities throughout Michigan to improve the visual appearance of transportation facilities, including bike paths, historic train stations and streets. Two projects in New Center received grants: the **New Center Woodward Gateway** retail district revitalization and the **New Amsterdam** loft district redevelopment.

The Woodward Gateway grant will result in the removal of the brown canopy along Woodward Avenue from Grand Boulevard to Baltimore Avenue. In its place, historic streetlights, street trees, decorative benches & trash receptacles, and brick & concrete paving will transform Woodward Avenue into an inviting, pedestrian-friendly strip. The addition of street trees, in particular, will help to soften this section of Detroit's main street. The City of Detroit will partially match the State of Michigan's \$800,000 grant to provide a total of \$1.5 million of improvements.

In addition, the New Center Council is working with building owners to establish a low interest loan program for facade improvements to the individual buildings, when the public improvements are complete.

"The finest property in the finest area. This clearly was my grandfather's vision and achievement many generations ago when he first purchased and improved properties on the corners of Woodward and Grand Boulevard. This once elegant area was not just a source of family pride, but of City pride, too.

But things change and over the past few decades it has been difficult to imagine what could break this unique area's spiral of decline. We feel the TEA-21 grant is a great icebreaker that can finally begin the "Woodward Gateway" renovation. As we continue with the next steps in the area's renewal, we sincerely thank those concerned Federal and State agencies, and the New Center Council for its vision, expertise, and hard work, for this opportunity to re-achieve my great grandfather's vision."

**Lawrence Henry
of the Burns Henry, Jr., Trust Properties.**

Note: The Burns Henry, Jr. Trust owns nine properties in the New Center Woodward Gateway District.

New Center Gateway property owners are thrilled by this announcement, as many who have planned improvements to their building facades have been waiting for the canopy to come down before beginning construction. Barbara Bradley, who owns a building between Grand Boulevard and Milwaukee, said, "I think this project will prepare us for the future customer base that will come from the new State of Michigan office center, the new Intermodal Train Station, and the construction of hundreds of new housing units in New Center. In particular, the removal of the canopy will make it possible for me to complete facade improvements and create a more customer-friendly environment."

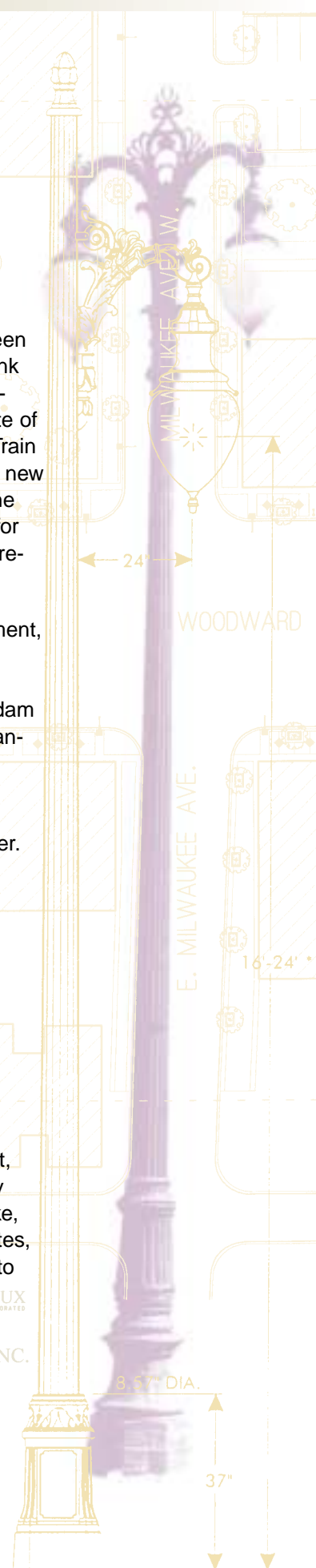
The New Amsterdam streetscape enhancement, a \$2.1 million project, includes \$700,000 of TEA-21 grant funding, with the remainder provided by the City of Detroit. New Amsterdam enhancements include ornamental pedestrian-scale streetlights, raised planters with new shade trees, decorative paving, and street furnishings along portions of Amsterdam, Burroughs, and Cass in southern New Center. David Farbman explains the importance of TEA-21 funding to The Farbman Group's loft developments at 6200 Second and 47 Burroughs: "This investment in public infrastructure will make New Amsterdam truly something special. This is the icing on the cake of our \$14 million investment in New Amsterdam."

New Center Council would like to thank the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Detroit Planning & Development Department, the Hudson-Webber Foundation, Detroit City Council, State Representative Hansen Clarke, Zachary & Associates, Albert Kahn Associates, and Allen & Laux Architects for their efforts to win this funding.

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