

# BUILDING INCLUSIVE CITIES

## Immigration and Neighborhood Change in Detroit

### OVERVIEW

“Building Inclusive Cities: Immigration and Neighborhood Change in Detroit” details the results of a two-year study of the impacts of rapid immigration growth in two Detroit neighborhoods: Banglatown/East Davison Village and Chadsey Condon. The study offers insight into why immigrants are drawn to the Detroit region and to these neighborhoods, and lays out the assets, strategies and resources they have used to thrive in their new communities. The study shows that welcoming and supporting immigrants can be a concrete, highly effective strategy to stabilize and revitalize disinvested neighborhoods with tangible benefits to both new and long-term residents.

The study was conducted by Global Detroit, a nonprofit economic development organization focused on immigrant inclusion, in partnership with Alan Mallach and Data Driven Detroit and with funding from the Hudson-Webber Foundation.

### KEY FINDINGS

#### POPULATION GROWTH

Both neighborhoods experienced population growth—stabilizing from years of population loss—while citywide population numbers continued to decline.

#### RESIDENT PERCEPTIONS

In both neighborhoods, residents felt the quality of life and safety in their neighborhood was both better and improving faster than residents in the city as a whole.

#### TAX DELINQUENCY & FORECLOSURE

Tax delinquencies and foreclosures were both significantly lower in both neighborhoods, compared to the city as a whole.

#### REAL ESTATE

Both neighborhoods show strong real estate activity and rising homeownership rates. Much of the homebuying is occurring outside the formal banking and mortgage financial systems.

#### HOUSING VACANCY

Housing vacancies are significantly lower in both neighborhoods than in the city as a whole.

#### EVICTION

Eviction rates in both neighborhoods are only one-third that of the city as a whole

#### CRIME RATES

Crime rates are significantly lower and declining relative to the rest of the city in both neighborhoods.

#### RETAIL ACTIVITY

Significant retail business growth is happening, especially along Conant Street in the Banglatown neighborhood, including the revitalization of formerly vacant stores.

### HOW CAN THIS RESEARCH HELP YOU?

We hope this report will influence policy and practices that impact neighborhoods across Detroit and in other legacy cities across the U.S. You can find the full report at [buildinginclusivecities.org](http://buildinginclusivecities.org).

If you are interested in accessing specific data, or discussing how our findings can support your organization’s efforts, please contact us at [info@globaldetroitmi.org](mailto:info@globaldetroitmi.org).

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### BEHIND THE NUMBERS



#### THE PULL OF JOBS

Many immigrant residents in both neighborhoods were attracted to the Detroit region by job opportunities, which they often learned about through word-of-mouth.



#### TRANSIT NETWORKS

Large numbers of immigrants work at a select group of mostly suburban automotive suppliers. An informal jitney network has emerged in the Bangladeshi community to transport the employees to their suburban jobs.



#### THE PULL OF COMMUNITY

The cultural support system that has developed in these neighborhoods has created a strong sense of community that not only draws immigrants to these neighborhoods, but encourages them to purchase homes and build strong neighborhood connections.



#### HOUSING AS OPPORTUNITY

Home ownership is seen by many immigrant families as a springboard for prosperity. They often utilize nontraditional or informal methods to purchase homes and rehab vacant properties, both for themselves and as investments.



#### SMALL BUSINESS ACTIVATION

Small business is a significant source of income and wealth building for immigrant entrepreneurs, and a powerful catalyst for commercial corridor revitalization.



#### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Immigrant residents in both neighborhoods feel largely disconnected from local government and municipal services.

Despite the strong ties immigrants have to their neighborhoods, their disconnection from local government may spur suburban out-migration unless they can be more strongly engaged with their neighbors and the city as a whole.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout our research, we have sought to leverage the strengths and unique assets we've observed in Banglatown/ East Davison Village and Chadsey Condon to shape recommendations that would positively impact all Detroiters—immigrants and longer-term residents. These recommendations include:

- Expand homeownership by better connecting Detroiters to low-cost, easy-to-navigate vacant property rehab programs, especially the Detroit Land Bank, and provide a support system for property owners engaged in rehab work
- Improve access to jobs, workforce development, education, training and career development services
- Support the growth and development of immigrant small businesses
- Build stronger links and networks among immigrant communities, and between immigrant and long-time neighborhood residents to enhance social cohesion
- Provide targeted initiatives and opportunities for immigrant women
- Support emerging community organization within immigrant communities and build a network of “trusted connectors” to connect immigrant communities with mainstream resources
- Increase immigrant hiring in municipal government and other public sector arenas