A Basic Community Profile: Brightmoor

Brightmoor is a community of 19,837 residents in Northwest Detroit and is bordered on the west by Telegraph Road, Eliza Howell Park and the Rouge River and on the East roughly by Evergreen Road with a Southern section between Evergreen and Southfield Roads (see map). It is situated entirely within the 48223 zip code area.

Development of Brightmoor began in the early 1920s when B.E. Taylor bought 160 acres of land in 1921, one mile from the Detroit city limits. He opened the Brightmoor Subdivision in 1922. Brightmoor grew quickly with an additional 2,913 acres added from 1923 to 1924. In 1926 it was annexed by the city of Detroit. The population of Brightmoor was primarily working class families that supported the auto industry.

Today, Brightmoor is still home to many working families including an estimated 7,380 children and youth (through age 18). The basic demographics of Brightmoor relative to population, income and poverty, education, health, and housing are outlined in this community profile along with a listing of key community assets.

Overall Population
According to the 2000 census, the population of the Brightmoor area is 19,837, which is slightly up (4%) from the 1990 census figure of 19,042. In comparison, the population of the State of Michigan has increased 7% in the same time period.

Brightmoor has a majority African American population (80.1%), with a white population of (14.2%). This make up is comparable to the average population of Detroit.

Brightmoor is a young community with 37.2% of the population under 18 in 2000 compared to a national average

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of 25.6% (Detroit 31.1%; State 26.1%). Seniors (65+) make up only 5.3% of the population (Detroit 10.5%; State 12.3%; USA 12.4%). The percentage of seniors in the Brightmoor area has decreased from 12% in 1990.

Brightmoor has a high population of single family households at 29.8% compared to a national average of 9.1% for the same time period (Detroit 21.5%; State 9.4%). 70.4% of births are to unmarried women in this zip code area (Detroit 69.7%; Tri-County 35%).

Brightmoor has a small percentage of foreign born residents at only 2.8% (Detroit 4.8%; State 5.3%; USA 11.1%). Brightmoor is a mobile community with 57.8% of respondents reporting that they had moved into their residence less than 5 years prior to the date of the survey (City 42.4%; State 45.3%; USA 48.8%).

**Income and Poverty**

The average income rate for Brightmoor in 2000 was $33,943 as compared to Detroit ($40,837), the State ($57,400), and nationally ($56,644). Lower income has translated into a higher level of poverty at over three times the rate of the State of Michigan (Brightmoor 32.3%; State 10.5%; Detroit 26.1%; USA 12.4%). Children living in poverty make up 40.4% of the population compared to 13.9% state-wide (City 34.8%; USA 16.6%). Current unemployment rate is 16.2% (City 13.8%; State 5.8%; USA 5.8%). In addition, 13.7% of the population receives public assistance income (City 11.4%; State 3.6%; USA 3.4%). Occupations reflect Brightmoor’s working class roots with 25.2% of the population working in production jobs compared to 14.6% nationally. Other major occupations are management (18.5%), personal care/service (23.2%), and sales (26.4%).

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Education

The number of people in the Brightmoor community without a high school diploma is 27.8, which is above the national average of 19.6%, but is less than the average in Detroit of 30.4% (State 16.6%). School attendance rates are generally higher than the tri-county area median, with an enrollment rate of 97.7% for children ages 5-17 in the zip code area that includes Brightmoor (Detroit 96.7%; Tri County area 97.5%).

The percentage of residents who have obtained a degree in higher education is only 8.2% compared to 24.4% for the national average (Detroit 11%; State 21.8%; USA 24.4%).

Health

The Detroit Health Department maintains health statistics by planning cluster and Brightmoor is in planning cluster number 8. In this area, the number of deaths from both cancer (153.7 per 100,000) and heart disease (252.6 per 100,000) has remained relatively constant since 1995. These rates compare to the city average of 201.8 for cancer and 344.4 for heart disease. The rate for heart disease deaths throughout the State is 285.3 and is 257.9 nationally. These Detroit, Michigan, and national rates are higher than the rates in Brightmoor. The overall death rate is also lower at 810.4 deaths per 100,000 compared to the city average of 1,049.2 per 100,000. The homicide rate increased from 42.6 per 100,000 to 52.7 over the same time period, which is high compared to 41.1 per 100,000 city wide. This is very high compared to the national rate of 5.5 per 100,000 and a state wide rate of 6.7 per 1000,000 during the same time period. The rate of suicide dropped from 6.4 per 100,000 to 3.3 per 100,000 compared to the Detroit rate of 6.8 per 100,000. The national suicide rate is 10.7 per 100,000.

Fewer children are tested for lead in this zip code area than in any other in the city; 34.8% of children ages 1-2 are being tested. This compares to 48.3% city wide. The number of children who have elevated blood levels are 2.7% compared to 7.2% for Detroit. The infant mortality rate is 17.8 per 1,000. This compares to a rate of 14.7 per 1,000 in Detroit and 6.9 per 1,000 nationally. There are no primary health care facilities located in or near the community.

1 Health statistics are available only by zip code or planning cluster. The statistics given here are for the 48223 zip code area or planning cluster 8. Brightmoor is contained entirely within this zip code and planning cluster, but they both include a significantly larger additional population.

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Housing
The total number of housing units is 7,737, down 1,602 units from 1990. 88% of all homes were built before 1970; many of them are 70 to 80 years old. Most housing units are single detached homes (77.1%) or large housing blocks with 20 or more units (10.8%). Average home values are low for the area at around $55,000 compared to about $70,000 for Detroit and approximately $160,000 nationally.

The overall home ownership rates are up for African Americans from 27.6% in 1990 to 37.2%, but lags behind white residents (71.3%). Overall home ownership rate is 44.5% compared to 54.9% in Detroit and 66.2% nationally (State 73.8%). Also, 47.8% of households pay more than 30% of their income for housing, which is qualified by HUD as bearing a “housing cost burden”; and 28.2% bear a “severe housing cost burden” of over 50% of income. This compares favorably to the national rates of 51% bearing a housing cost burden and 25.8% bearing a severe housing cost burden (Detroit 46.1%, 25.6%; State 44.8%, 21.7%). This might be due to the fact that the housing values are lower in this area, thus creating less of a burden despite lower incomes in the area.

The vacancy rate is also higher than Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan and national averages. (see chart).

A very high percentage (46.7%) of home buyers are financed by “subprime lenders” or financial institutions that charge a higher rate of interest based on a lender’s blemished credit rating (Detroit 44.1%; State 9.7%; USA 12.8%).

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Appendix: Community Assets/ Resources

Community assets and resources have been identified and are listed below. Residents are invited and encouraged to identify additional assets and resources.

Schools
- Burt Elementary School
- Gompers Elementary School
- Harding Elementary School
- Healy International Academy
- Hubert Elementary School
- Murphy Middle School
- Vetal Elementary School

Houses of Worship
- Leland Missionary
- Baber Memorial
- Greater Southern Missionary
- Mount Vernon
- Beth-El
- Joy Temple
- More Excellent Way
- New Resurrection
- PCL Christian Center
- St. Paul
- New Resurrection Faith Ministries
- Rosedale Park
- Bethany
- Second Corinthian
- St. Raphael of Brooklyn
- New Life Apostolic Church
- Greater Southern
- Mt. Vernon
- St. Gemma Galgani
- Brightmoor Corps
- Northwest
- Eber Memorial
- God Land
- Cathedral of Faith
- Deeper Life Gospel Center

Neighborhood associations
- Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Project
- Brightmoor Community Center

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• Motor City Blight Busters
• The Detroit Project (Ann Arbor)
• City Mission

Parks
• Howell, Eliza Park
• Midland-Bentler Playground
• Optimist-Stout Playground
• Outer Drive-Burgess Playground
• Outer Drive-Fullerton
• River Rouge Park
• Rockdale-Kendall Playground
• Romanowski, Sgt. Park
• Rouge Valley Parkway
• Stoepel Park No. 1

Transportation
• Smart routes
  63
  66
  102
  103
• DDOT routes
  15
  38
  40
  47

Head Start Centers
• Harding (I, II, and III)
• New St. Paul Brightmoor Head Start Center
• Leland Head Start Center

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