



COMMUNITY & NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE: *The Seven Mile Project*

## Seven Mile SPOTLIGHT

A special publication of the Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC) 313.893.5269 or 248.559.1990 MYACC.org

### Building a Better Community

ACC's Seven Mile Project, a Community & Neighborhood Development Initiative, is aimed at revitalizing the area both economically and residentially. Divided into three phases, the project has provided a glimmer of hope on the long-abandoned Seven Mile Road nestled between John R Road and Woodward Avenue. The project received its "COOL CITIES" designation by the Governor's office in 2005.

The Seven Mile Project was developed to address the pressing needs of the surrounding community with an end result of a healthier and more dynamic community. This project promises outstanding growth potential for the Seven Mile community.

ACC strategy for the Seven Mile Development Initiative is a five point approach to neighborhood revitalization.

1. Creating a clean and safe living and working environment.
2. Designing a commercial, destination corridor with an ethnic, Middle Eastern theme.
3. Supporting the initiative with ACC staff, 45 taskforce volunteers, and local merchants.
4. Restructuring Economic Redevelopment through systematic planning.
5. Promoting the re-birth of the area with street fairs and festivals, newsletters, and banners.

Among the activities included are the Storefront Improvement Project, Town Hall Meetings, Neighborhood Clean Ups, Business Development, Streetscape Design/Improvements, and Community Outreach.

### Governor designates ACC Seven Mile Project Cool Cities Neighborhood



Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth Director Robert W. Swanson represented Governor Granholm by awarding the 2006 Cool Cities Grants & Planning Programs designees at ACC's Youth Recreation & Leadership Center on Wednesday, July 19.

ACC's Seven Mile Project received the Cool Cities "Neighborhoods in Progress" designation, priority access to "tool box" items, and a \$100,000 grant. The Seven Mile Project was awarded due to its close partnerships with existing community organizations and its plans to create large-scale neighborhood/community improvements.

The Cool Cities designations are part of Governor Granholm's economic plan to revitalize Michigan's cities by retaining and attracting jobs and people to grow Michigan's economy.

The Cool Cities program utilizes existing state resources, which are used more efficiently through the collaboration of state agencies. Funds provided by the Cool Cities grant will assist in the completion of ACC's Artisan Center and Park.

## PHASE I: THE COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

In the place of what was once a social club then an abandoned building, now stands a thriving community health and social services outreach center open to all residents in the surrounding community. The center was completed in 1998.

The total renovation effort that resulted in the ACC Detroit Headquarters was made possible through seed money from the United Way Capital Campaign. The grand opening of the ACC Detroit Headquarters located at 111 W. Seven Mile Road was an important milestone for the organization. The facility houses an impressive one-stop shop array of medical, employment training, and numerous educational programs and services for all those in need of assistance. Also located on site is the Cultural Arts and Conference Center which features a permanent exhibit of Middle Eastern art and artifacts.

### BEFORE



### AFTER



### ACC Detroit Headquarters

111 W. Seven Mile Road, Detroit, MI 48203

(313) 893-5269

Programs housed in this office include the following:

#### ACC– Department of Human Services

Services include: Translation & Interpretation, Assist DHS staff during home visits, initial and follow up interviews, Assistance in completing forms, Accompany DHS staff on home visits, Hearing Representation, Employment Referrals, Child Support Advocacy, and Cultural Training.

#### Detroit Work First/JET Program

Provides orientation, job counseling, resume writing, vocational/classroom training, job placement, job search and readiness, tutorial instruction, motivational lessons, and assists clients in utilizing child daycare through DHS and 4C.

#### Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

A training and employment program that offers basic and intensive training services to assist individuals in learning English as a Second Language (ESL), Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL), career counseling, resume writing skills, interview skills, job search and job placement.

#### Detroit Community Health Connection Office

The medical clinic is located on the first floor of ACC’s headquarters.



## PHASE II: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

Improving Seven Mile storefront façades created an inviting and aesthetically pleasing shopping area. The project completed seven facades and is working with more business owners to improve the Seven Mile Business District.

Revitalizing the Seven Mile Corridor by opening the Youth Recreation and Leadership Center located at 62 W. Seven Mile Road was a much-needed facility for the area. The Youth Center provides a variety of activities and educational programs for the area youth looking to becoming contributing and responsible citizens.



**ACC Youth Recreation and Leadership Center**  
**62 W. Seven Mile Road, Detroit, MI 48203**  
**(313) 369-3100**

Opened in 2005, the center provides a safe and healthy environment where youth participate in a variety of activities and programs. The center is equipped with a gymnasium, computer lab, program offices, a community board room and a dental clinic.

Programs housed in this office include the following:

- ACC– Wayne County Mental Health Services
- Tobacco Cessation Program
- Women Infant and Children Nutrition Program
- Teen Health Program
- Detroit - Substance Abuse Prevention Program
- SEMCA Substance Abuse & Drug Prevention
- Youth Programs and Services

### Store Front Improvement Project

Great strides have been made in this unique initiative in which ACC supports and creates incentives for business owners to initiate improvements in store front, thus creating an inviting and aesthetically pleasing shopping atmosphere. To date seven facades have been completed to improve the Seven Mile Business District.

#### BEFORE



#### AFTER



**B & S Collision**



**Motown Fish & Seafood**



**99¢ Store**



**Pyramids Bakery**

**Visit us on the web at [MYACC.org](http://MYACC.org)**

## PHASE III: NEIGHBORHOOD RENEWAL

Phase Three will result in an even greater interest in living in the Seven Mile Area. When a strong, safe pedestrian friendly business district is in place with numerous cultural attractions, convenient access and adequate parking, residential renewal is a natural next step. The expansion of services available at the Artisan and Adult Learning Center will also prove to be enticing for residents to settle in the neighborhood.

Through an articulation of public and private resources for urban renewal, the already culturally rich residential community is also undergoing a transformation. ACC is in the process of renovating and beautifying the Seven Mile Corridor with its Streetscape Project and Community Pocket Park. The result will be a vibrant commercial and residential district that will benefit the City of Detroit and surrounding communities.



### **ACC Artisan and Adult Learning Center 55 W. Seven Mile Road, Detroit, MI 48203**

Initiating the Artisan and Adult Learning Center, ACC aims to encourage artists of diverse and ethnic and racial backgrounds the opportunity to preserve, promote, and adopt traditional artistic experiences.

The completed 13,000-square-foot building houses workspace for artists as well as a gallery area and a Middle Eastern-themed café. The second floor is committed to adult education and features a

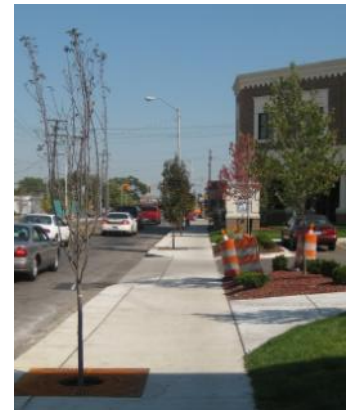
computer lab, conference room, program offices and an adult learning center that will provide programs that promote achievement and increase individual well being.

### **Seven Mile Streetscape**

Our architectural and design committee is working closely with the urban planning firm of McKenna and Associates to put the finishing touches on this phase of the project.

This project was funded by the Michigan Department of Transportation with help from Wayne County Parks and Recreation.

The Seven Mile Streetscape includes: Sidewalk Improvements, Brick Pavers, Street Trees, Crosswalk Specialty Paving, Planting Beds, Trash receptacles, Park Benches.



Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC)  
Community & Neighborhood Development  
Initiative: The Seven Mile Project

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111 W. Seven Mile Road, Detroit, MI 48203

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### **Community Pocket Park**

On the site of building 99 and the current parking lot, ACC, with support from Wayne County and the private sector, will be constructing a Community Pocket Park for the enjoyment of the total community. The park will provide park benches, improved lighting, trash receptacles and decorative pavers. When completed the park will provide the community a venue to enjoy the outdoors in a clean and safe environment.