

BURB

BONA FIDE BIRMINGHAM

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2021

Volume 7, Issue 3



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WHEN HOUSE
HUNTING GETS HARD

BIRMINGHAM

Opening

- The Shade Store opened its first store in Michigan at 142 S. Old Woodward. The store specializes in blinds, curtains and other window accessories.
- ItalCasa Design, a luxury modern European furniture showroom and interior design studio has opened at 33772 Woodward Ave
- OneStream Software, a rapidly growing company who has grown in value from around \$1 Billion 2 years ago to over \$6 Billion in 2021 is expected to move into 191 N. Chester the former First Church of Christ Scientists, now known as The Jeffery, after deceased Birmingham developer, Jeff Surnow.
- Jersey Bagel at Lincoln and Adams has opened; it is the 3rd Jersey Bagel to open in the area.
- Michigan Chandelier, recently purchased by the investment firms Uniprop of Birmingham and Seneca Partners of Southfield, is expected to open in the former Rojo on Merrill

Approved

- The Final Site Plan and Design Review was approved by the Planning Board of a new 5 story mixed use building at 35001 Woodward. The site is currently the home of a parking lot & Hunter House Hamburgers.
- A Bistro Liquor License was approved by the Planning Board for the Whistle Stop restaurant on Eton. The hours of operation are not expected to change.
- Bloom Bistro was approved for a Bistro Liquor License by the Planning Board on May 26th. Bloom will be located in the former Pita Café location on N. Old Woodward with outdoor dining in the alley opposite The Dow.
- Sushi Japan was approved for a Bistro Liquor License by the Planning Board on May 26th. They are located at 176 S. Old Woodward, the former 2941 Street Food.
- Mare Mediterranean will be opening in the former Cameron's at 115 Willits. Mare will specialize in seafood and is owned by Nino Cutraro of Bella Piatti and Jay Feldman of Feldman Automotive Group.



IN BULLETS...

Calendar

- The deadline to file as a candidate for City Commission or Library Board Member is July 20th. The election for both is November 2.
- Day on the Town, Birmingham's biggest retail event is, July 31 from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- The Birmingham Shopping District will host movies on July 16th (Elf) and August 13th (Cars). Check www.AllinBirmingham.com/events for more information
- The city is holding a golf tournament with dinner and a dueling piano show on July 24th at Lincoln Hills Golf Course.
- Desoto Drive Concert & Ice Cream Social at Next, 2121 Midvale on Thursday, July 29, 2021 from 6:00pm - 7:00pm
- The 2nd Annual Costume Jewelry Sale at Next, 2121 Midvale will be held on Monday August 16 - Friday August 20th . All proceeds benefit Next!

Did you Know?

If you work in the Birmingham Shopping District, you're eligible for an Employee Discount Card offering special discounts at participating Birmingham merchants. The cards are available at the Birmingham Shopping District office located at 151 Martin Street, Birmingham MI 48009. For more information, call 248-530-1200.



APPROVED 5 STORY
MIXED USE BUILDING



WHISTLE STOP
DINER ON ETON



JERSEY BAGEL





THE DORCHESTER URBAN COTTAGE

TIMELESS DESIGN ADDRESSES A CHANGING WORLD

An Urban Cottage can be defined as a home combining the comfort of a cottage with the clean design of a contemporary décor...

In S.E. Michigan, the number of households with 2+ persons with children decreased nearly 10% from 2010 to 2019 while households with 2+ persons and no children increased almost 6%. In fact, households with 2 adults and no children commonly referred to as "Empty Nesters" now represent over 40% of our S.E. Michigan area. Why does this matter? One big reason is the housing stock that has been built up over decades has been largely focused on traditional families with children. Two-story colonials with 3-5 bedrooms upstairs,

a laundry often in the basement, museum-like formal living and dining rooms, kept pristine while the kids camped out in the family room, kitchen and maybe the basement. In Birmingham much of our housing stock built in the 40's and 50's are Bungalows that typically have 2-3 small bedrooms downstairs and frequently a converted attic into a "Master" bedroom. Clearly, much of this established housing stock is poorly suited to meet the demands of our changing family structure. One recently completed home was designed and built to

address the wants of the post children-at-home family. This Birmingham home located on Dorchester Road was designed by a local architect and built by BOSCO Building Inc., one of the areas premier luxury homebuilders. The architect refers to the style as an "Urban Cottage" in function and a "Modern Craftsman" in style. An Urban Cottage can be defined as a home combining the comfort of a cottage with the clean design of a contemporary décor, which certainly seems appropriate for this property.

The attributes of this home that make it particularly well suited for a couple past their child rearing years can be broken down into 5 common aspirations of the target buyer.

ACCOMMODATING

The ideal materials for an Empty Nester targeted home are both beautiful yet low maintenance. After years of addressing others needs merely shifting this time into home upkeep seems like a poor tradeoff. The finishes in the Dorchester home reflect an upscale and carefree manner. The exterior features Fond du Lac stone, brick, standing seam metal roof, clad windows and Sagiper siding from Portugal with a 50-year warranty. The design also does not require gutters that can get clogged and cause ice damming. Landscape beds are simple and use rocks versus mulch, avoiding regular replenishment and deterring insects while still helping to keep weeds at bay. Inside, Somerset factory finished floors and large format ceramic tiles, granite composite sinks, granite counters and super long lasting LED lights all contribute to reduced upkeep.

ADAPTABLE

Having multipurpose space is central to an Urban Cottage as it allows the home to maintain a manageable size for the occupants while still addressing a breadth of needs. During the Pandemic, with the increase of people working from home, a 2nd office area became important to many families. In the expansive Bedroom #2 at the Dorchester home is a perfect nook for a 2nd work area facilitated by a 2nd closet in the room. Of course there is also a bonus room upstairs that could also be purposed for a 2nd (or 3rd) study, playroom, craft room or merely additional storage. The upstairs can also be taken offline with the zoned HVAC. The home's mud/laundry room, well situated between the kitchen and garage, has abundant space and storage to also entertain a variety of activities behind the 20 cabinet doors and drawers and large double closet.



AMENITIES

Implicit in the post-parenting period is the presumed earned indulgence in convenience and pampering after a few decades of deferred gratification. Anthony Bosco, the builder explains, "by the time most of our clients are ready to downsize, they have very specific ideas, wants, and needs for their new home." This Urban Cottage feature list, as such, is extensive. Inside, integral pull down window screens, Cat6E wiring, WIFI garage door opener with exterior keypad, his/her walk-in closets and additional outlets throughout can be found. Bath enhancements include dual showerheads, dual sinks, temp-set valve, built-in shower seat, soaking tub and humidity sensing fans. The kitchen incorporates a built-in French style fridge, built-in microwave/convection oven, large cabinet drawers, 5 burner cooktop, spray head faucet and Granite Island with seating. A large covered front porch and an oversized garage; with clerestory windows are two other niceties to be enjoyed.

AFFLUENCE

The 4th attribute pertains to luxury. Typically at the point that the kids have vacated, the parents might be at their peak earning level with a probable drop in expenses. The prospect of enjoying some of the finer things in life is enticing. Often the house purchased after children leave is the most opulent home the couple will have ever bought. The Dorchester Urban Cottage excels in this regard starting with the builder. Bosco Building has been around for 45 years and has a well-earned reputation of impeccable quality. Using skilled craftsman from around the state, Don and son Anthony Bosco carefully constructed a timeless structure that will endure long after "builder grade" homes have begun to deteriorate. Besides their attention to detail, elements of the home contribute to the luxurious ambiance. Thick, solid core 8' doors, custom cabinets, 9' ceilings, unique granite counters, casement windows, an extra deep garage overhang, silky smooth sprayed trim and much more. The manufacturers of the elements comprising this home are also indicative of the quality and

richness. Starting with a full suite of stainless Bertazzoni kitchen appliances and bath fixtures by Hansgrohe, Blanco, Toto, JSG Oceana and Victoria & Albert the lavish perception becomes real. Even the Trane HVAC and Bradford-White mechanicals are superior.

ACCESSIBLE

The final "A" pertains not only to the house but also to the location. Staying active is central to the longevity that many "Empty Nesters" resolve to achieve. Being able to walk to accomplish everyday tasks can be both healthy and productive. This Urban home is within 1/2 mile to 5 groceries, nearly 20 dining options and several health clubs, pet shops, hardware stores and parks. It is also walkable to both train and bus stations. Just a little past a 5 block radius from the house you will find a post office, several more parks, dozens more restaurants and downtown Birmingham.

From a design standpoint the home has many attributes that make it very accessible but most obvious is that



it offers 1-floor living. The floor plan is simple, well laid out and avoids tight spaces and transitions. Many of the home's features also contribute to accessibility such as handle locksets (vs. knobs), adjustable shower spray heads, shower seating, comfort height toilets and additional lower kitchen drawers.

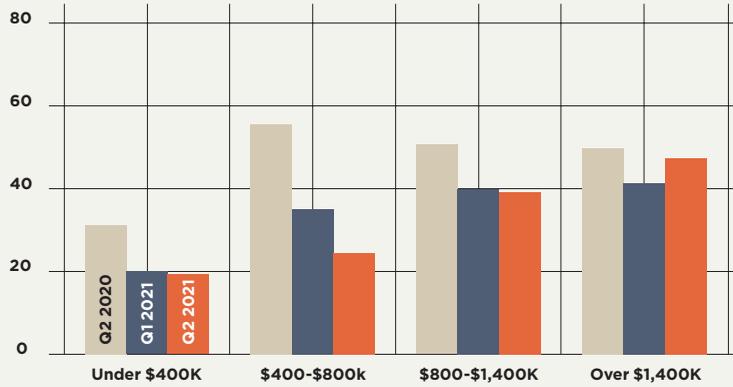
Consistent with the changing demographic of the U.S., including our town, one would expect to see more homes built in the spirit of the Dorchester Urban Cottage. With the size of the Baby Boomer cohort this migration to more conducive housing is likely to be sustained for quite awhile. Let's hope they are as timeless and beautiful as this specimen...

If the Dorchester Urban Cottage might meet your needs, contact Stuart Jeffares at the TheJeffaresGroup@gmail.com to arrange a visit.



MARKET

2ND QUARTER 2021



Available

ACTIVE LISTINGS

Inventory very tight under \$800K



Sold!

TOTAL SALES

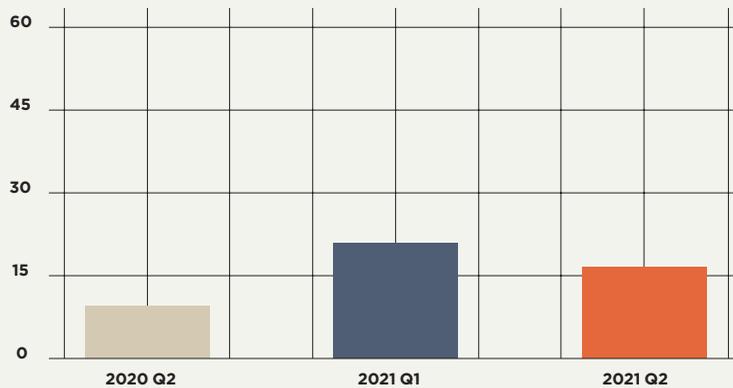
Big increases year over year across entire market



Price

AVERAGE \$/S.F.

Pull back in upper end



New

NEW SINGLE FAMILY HOME PERMITS

Building constrained by labor and material shortages



BY THE NUMBERS

2ND QUARTER
2021 RESIDENTIAL
SALES

Address	Sales Price	Price/ S.F.
472 Bonnie Brier Street	\$2,262,000	\$646
767 Purdy Street	\$1,780,000	\$532
311 E Frank Street	\$1,450,000	\$518
927 Ann Street	\$1,740,000	\$512
566 Hanna Street	\$2,000,000	\$500
1228 Washington Boulevard	\$1,249,000	\$454
574 Westchester Way	\$1,700,000	\$442
470 Lakeside Drive	\$1,600,000	\$441
1572 Holland St	\$341,000	\$439
512 George	\$530,000	\$430
1405 Pilgrim Avenue	\$2,100,000	\$425
909 Southfield Road	\$1,625,000	\$417
1272 Washington Boulevard	\$1,570,000	\$416
517 Kimberley Road	\$1,250,000	\$410
895 Harmon Street	\$675,000	\$409
983 Wimbleton Drive	\$1,835,000	\$408
939 Hazel St	\$1,255,000	\$401
676 Ridgedale Avenue	\$575,000	\$401
1798 Maryland Boulevard	\$1,477,000	\$399
864 Forest Avenue	\$1,475,000	\$399
1228 Ruffner Avenue	\$870,000	\$398
600 Arlington Street	\$2,170,000	\$396
1196 Lakeside Drive	\$1,625,000	\$396
494 Pleasant Street	\$1,850,000	\$395
1363 Pilgrim Avenue	\$1,900,000	\$387
2098 Dorchester Road	\$393,000	\$386
1247 Emmons Avenue	\$270,000	\$381
579 Wallace Street	\$1,356,500	\$380
1948 Hazel Street	\$1,050,000	\$378
848 Smith Avenue	\$777,000	\$378
1111 Willow Lane	\$1,525,000	\$377
487 Smith Avenue	\$487,500	\$368
1482 Bowers Street	\$405,000	\$368
1835 Washington Boulevard	\$1,025,000	\$366
1137 Suffield Avenue	\$1,346,750	\$366
695 Bird Avenue	\$316,500	\$365
2058 Bradford Road	\$360,000	\$361
1392 Bird Avenue	\$1,050,000	\$361
1468 Shipman Boulevard	\$1,699,000	\$359
1404 Humphrey Avenue	\$930,000	\$358
1520 Bennaville Avenue	\$710,000	\$357
1709 Holland Street	\$719,000	\$356
1624 Cole Street	\$815,000	\$354
1630 Villa Road	\$850,000	\$354
1414 Maryland Boulevard	\$1,600,000	\$353
971 Pierce Street	\$1,500,000	\$352
954 Chestnut Street	\$872,500	\$352
385 E Southlawn Boulevard	\$450,000	\$352
1228 Villa Road	\$499,000	\$351
1061 Bennaville Avenue	\$700,000	\$350
787 Oakland Avenue	\$485,000	\$348
532 Bennaville Avenue	\$495,000	\$346
1755 Torry Street	\$381,500	\$346
1866 Pierce Street	\$967,000	\$343
1869 Birmingham Boulevard	\$1,372,000	\$342
1555 Ruffner Avenue	\$750,000	\$342
1326 Cedar Drive	\$1,125,000	\$341
1093 Suffield Avenue	\$1,425,000	\$339
1481 E Lincoln Street	\$350,000	\$338
1508 Maryland Boulevard	\$820,000	\$335

Address	Sales Price	Price/ S.F.
774 Bennaville Ave	\$1,130,000	\$334
1859 Hazel Street	\$880,000	\$332
1721 S Bates Street	\$836,000	\$331
1076 Floyd Street	\$458,000	\$330
1823 Pembroke Road	\$1,025,000	\$330
1239 Holland Street	\$625,000	\$329
772 Willits Street	\$915,000	\$329
1619 E Maple Road	\$350,000	\$328
1557 S Bates Street	\$853,000	\$328
1595 Northlawn Boulevard	\$899,000	\$328
1650 Henrietta Street	\$1,061,000	\$327
1759 Henrietta Street	\$509,000	\$326
621 Larchlea Drive	\$870,000	\$325
826 Larchlea Drive	\$975,000	\$324
1312 Humphrey Avenue	\$365,500	\$324
775 Wallace Street	\$1,350,000	\$324
1201 Brookwood Street	\$1,620,000	\$322
875 Henley St. Street	\$645,000	\$322
2281 W Lincoln Street	\$420,000	\$320
955 Larchlea Drive	\$1,452,000	\$320
408 Bird Avenue	\$300,000	\$316
1393 E Lincoln Street	\$775,000	\$316
2362 Windemere Road	\$410,917	\$315
1595 Yosemite Boulevard	\$930,000	\$315
535 Wallace Street	\$590,000	\$315
440 Catalpa Drive	\$1,134,000	\$315
2288 Derby Road	\$367,500	\$314
1983 E Lincoln Street	\$333,000	\$314
372 Harmon Street	\$1,314,000	\$313
1934 Croft Road	\$350,000	\$312
1042 Chestnut Street	\$439,000	\$312
954 Bird Avenue	\$685,000	\$311
1236 Edgewood Road	\$730,500	\$310
2453 Radnor Street	\$485,000	\$310
1721 Winthrop Lane	\$749,000	\$310
1025 Willow Lane	\$930,000	\$309
981 Ann Street	\$900,000	\$309
1534 Penistone Street	\$345,000	\$309
1139 Emmons Avenue	\$355,000	\$309
1844 Cole Street	\$1,060,000	\$308
1630 Mansfield Road	\$450,000	\$307
559 Bennaville Avenue	\$690,000	\$305
1869 Shipman Boulevard	\$970,000	\$305
852 Henley Street	\$665,000	\$304
848 Bennaville Avenue	\$548,850	\$304
588 Cherry Court	\$575,000	\$303
1884 Banbury Street	\$395,000	\$300
1974 Holland Street	\$259,900	\$300
587 Greenwood Street	\$800,000	\$299
1851 Raynale Street	\$975,000	\$299
264 Larchlea Drive	\$895,000	\$298
1992 Holland St	\$595,000	\$296
925 Bird Avenue	\$645,000	\$296
1003 Wakefield Street	\$610,000	\$296
1731 Cole Street	\$740,000	\$295
2455 Buckingham Avenue	\$311,000	\$295
991 N Glenhurst Drive	\$1,390,000	\$294
1334 Cole Street	\$685,000	\$293
179 Suffield Avenue	\$1,175,000	\$292
1255 Webster Street	\$520,000	\$291

Address	Sales Price	Price/ S.F.
1782 Webster Street	\$365,000	\$286
472 Bennaville Avenue	\$400,000	\$286
1585 Buckingham Avenue	\$749,900	\$286
533 Wallace Street	\$1,000,000	\$285
1492 Ruffner Avenue	\$755,000	\$285
1183 E 14 Mile Road	\$210,000	\$285
1222 Fairfax Street	\$1,390,000	\$284
1422 Westboro	\$860,000	\$283
801 Henley Street	\$917,500	\$283
1606 Humphrey Avenue	\$900,000	\$282
1094 Kennesaw Street	\$555,629	\$281
131 E Lincoln Street	\$415,000	\$281
1882 Pierce Street	\$655,000	\$280
1667 Maryland Boulevard	\$542,500	\$280
1127 Smith Avenue	\$525,000	\$280
1019 Canterbury Street	\$679,000	\$279
683 Kimberley Road	\$665,000	\$279
440 Bennaville Avenue	\$531,000	\$276
1720 Washington Boulevard	\$860,000	\$275
1077 Fairfax Street	\$850,000	\$274
746 Puritan Avenue	\$1,190,000	\$274
1467 Norfolk Street	\$495,000	\$274
1586 Penistone Street	\$325,000	\$272
586 Fairfax Street	\$825,000	\$272
165 Puritan Avenue	\$680,000	\$271
1685 Henrietta Street	\$733,000	\$271
2361 Windemere Road	\$509,500	\$264
1492 Bird Avenue	\$650,900	\$267
1967 Sheffield Road	\$365,000	\$264
1583 Villa Road	\$525,000	\$261
675 Wallace Street	\$685,000	\$261
1313 Westboro	\$979,500	\$260
390 Larchlea Drive	\$875,000	\$259
1569 Emmons Avenue	\$339,000	\$256
1744 Torry Street	\$285,000	\$254
2747 Manchester Road	\$490,000	\$254
1910 Holland	\$235,000	\$253
1690 Fairway Drive	\$485,000	\$253
2799 Pembroke Road	\$334,900	\$250
1220 E Maple Road	\$300,000	\$250
130 Lake Park Drive	\$900,000	\$249
839 Ridgedale Avenue	\$750,000	\$248
1712 Winthrop Lane	\$740,000	\$246
1387 Smith Avenue	\$455,000	\$245
791 N Eton Street	\$360,000	\$242
1733 Pembroke Road	\$1,100,000	\$241
1382 Haynes Court	\$415,000	\$241
888 Purdy Street	\$882,500	\$238
1115 Brookwood Street	\$710,000	\$237
964 Kennesaw Street	\$860,000	\$235
1383 E 14 Mile Road	\$526,000	\$235
2435 Devon Lane	\$1,050,000	\$234
937 Ruffner Avenue	\$555,000	\$233
1230 Latham Street	\$600,000	\$232
2434 Devon Lane	\$500,000	\$230
833 E 14 Mile Road	\$212,500	\$210
878 Henrietta Street	\$625,000	\$203
1408 Chapin Avenue	\$230,000	\$203
315 Chesterfield Avenue	\$465,000	\$198
44359 Manitou Drive	\$338,000	\$181



CARLESS... and We Couldn't Care Less!

BURB Goes a Day Without a Car

Each year on September 22, many European cities celebrate World Car Free Day to promote walkable, close-knit communities and improved public transportation. Going car-free for a day also promotes more environmentally friendly alternatives to driving a car: cycling, walking, and using public transit. We wondered, would going car-free for a day be possible for those living in the suburbs of the Motor City (i.e. Birmingham)? Is the local public transit effective? Accessible? BURB set out to find out. Follow along as we relay our adventure!

We started the day by riding our bikes to downtown Birmingham and parking (and locking) them safely in front of City Hall. After eating breakfast at Toast, we were well fueled to begin the day in earnest.



8:00 - Pedal from home to downtown Birmingham

- Meet in front of City Hall and park bikes
- Breakfast at Toast (delicious, as usual, thanks Violeta!)

BURB Experience: In Birmingham, for the most part, bikes share the same road space with motorized vehicles. Although there are some reminders of this painted on the road and some signage, a cyclist can feel like an intruder on the road. Regarding parking for cyclists, essentially all spots are uncovered and spread sporadically around the town. Safe to say, there is room for improvement...

9:15 - Walk around Birmingham taking care of errands

- Get cash at the Chief Financial Credit Union ATM
- Take a pair of shoes to Frank's Shoe Repair (they can fix anything, seriously)
- Grab mail and an Espresso in the Max Broock lobby (stop in for a complementary cup!)
- Deliver copies of Burb to Daxton (coolest lobby around)
- Have new watch battery installed by Dylan and Joel at Mount n-Repair (While we wait!)
- Look at bike gear at Moosejaw (very helpful staff..)
- Check out Detroit T-Shirts at Caruso Caruso (cool for over 35 years)
- Purchase hostess gifts at Steele Angel (1st visit, definitely not the last)

- Buy party gift at Suhm-Thing (spent 5 minutes just reading funny dish towels)
- Dump purchases off at Max Broock (Fun Fact: Max Broock is the 2nd largest private sector employer in Birmingham)

BURB Experience: Birmingham is a very walkable town and the selection of businesses allows a resident or visitor to complete many daily tasks on foot

11:45 - Ride the SMART FAST bus from Woodward and Maple to Woodward & 11 Mile

- Lunch at O.W.L. (awesome street tacos, owned by Birmingham's Bongiovanni family!)

BURB Experience: The FAST bus travels up and down select corridors including Woodward with a limited number of stops to ensure a speedy trip. We used the SMART Bus app to track the bus real-time. It was a useful tool despite a few minor shortcomings. After the bus arrived a few minutes later than expected, we bought bus passes using the DART (Detroit Area Regional Transit) app. Our driver, Antrell, who recently retired after a career in the military, couldn't have been nicer. He told us how to purchase a \$5.00 24-hour pass via the app; we assumed we could use a card on the bus, but SMART only accepts cash (other than the DART app). The pass purchase on the app was very simple and quick. The affordable pass allows for unlimited bus rides within a 24-hour period and works for SMART (Southeastern Michigan Area Regional Transportation) and DDOT (Detroit Department of Transportation) buses as well as the Q-Line streetcar which does a 6+ mile loop on Woodward from New Center to the Detroit River (Congress Street). There are other passes available for 4-hour, 7-day, and 31-day periods. Without a pass, one ride of any length is \$2.00 in cash. Reduced cost passes are also available per some qualifications (see SMART website for more information).





12:25 - Ride FAST bus from Woodward and 11 Mile to Larned and Brush

BURB Experience: Now that we have our passes, boarding is quick and easy. While we traveled down Woodward, other passengers requested stops at bus stops along the way. By pulling a wire along the windows of the bus, passengers can let the driver know their stop is coming up. The bus only stops at bus stops labeled "FAST" to speed up travel time. Otherwise, the bus does not stop; every bus that travels south of 8 Mile is a FAST bus. There are three FAST bus routes: along Woodward, Gratiot, and Michigan Avenues.

1:10 - Ride scooters (Spin & Lime) to Comerica Park

- Watch Tigers beat the Mariners (lots of homers)!!

BURB Experience: The stand-up scooters are everywhere along the Woodward Corridor once you are in the downtown. There are 3 electric stand-up scooter companies that serve Detroit: Lime, Spin and Bird. Each requires an app that the rider uses to scan a QR code on the scooters. On Spin you pay an "unlocking" fee of a dollar, then it costs \$.39 per minute to ride the scooter. Lime costs \$3.50 for the 1st 7 minutes and then \$.35 per minute thereafter plus tax. The apps were easy enough to use but took a while to initially figure out. All the scooter companies hire people to pick up and charge the scooters nightly; riders don't have to worry about returning scooters to a charging station. The apps show a map with all the available scooters and their charge levels, which was easy to navigate and helpful. Most all scooters on the map were mostly if not fully charged. Once we linked our cards to the app to pay for the scooters, we easily made it to Comerica Park, ended our rides on the scooter apps, and parked them nearby other scooters, a few feet from the gates to the ballpark. Added bonus, on a hot day, the scooters were perfect for cooling off!



3:05 - Ride Boaz electric sit-down scooters to Cultural Area

- Visit the Detroit Historical Museum (Must See: Motor City Music Exhibit)
- Check out Detroit Public Library (Fun Fact: designer Cass Gilbert also designed the US Supreme Court building)

BURB Experience: We found two Boaz scooters immediately outside of Comerica Park. Boaz scooters premiered in Detroit in 2019. Their scooters have a seat and basket in the back, plus slightly bigger tires than the stand-up scooters for a very smooth ride. The Boaz bikes travel at around 15 mph, the same as the other scooters. Although it was almost identical to the other electric scooter apps, the Boaz Bikes app was more glitchy: we both bought \$15.00 worth of ride credit because the app seemed to require it. The only drawback might be having some unused credit at the end of your ride. It should be noted that originally we planned on using the Q-Line to travel from Comerica Park to the Cultural Center. However, due to Covid, some options such as the Q-Line, the People Mover and Gest carts (Uber-like golf carts) were still suspended. The Q-Line expects to be up and running again mid-late summer. ballpark. Added bonus, on a hot day, the scooters were perfect for cooling off!

5:15 - Walk throughout the University area

- Walk the beautiful Wayne State University campus (well... part of it. WSU is over 200 acres!)
- Walk to Ima for dinner (Best Ramen in Detroit!)



6:35 - Pedal MoGo bikes in search of some dessert

- Bike to Treat Dreams for Ice Cream, decide against the flavor of the day, Jalapeño!
- Cycle over to docking station near the Amtrak station

BURB Experience: MoGo is a Detroit-based nonprofit rideshare organization. They provide docked bikes in 6 cities around Metro Detroit. With over 600 bikes and 75 docking stations, availability of bikes and docks were plentiful. A MoGo bike station was across the street from Ima, so we used the Transit app (MoGo does not have their own dedicated app) to unlock two bikes. We had to input codes from each bike into the app, a confusing issue (at least initially) when it came to unlocking the bikes. The bikes had to be returned to another dedicated MoGo docking station, a difference from the electric scooters that may sometimes be a slight inconvenience (although there are docks nearly everywhere). The nearest one was a 10-minute walk from the Amtrak station. Kudos to Detroit for having many well-marked bike lanes in the Downtown.

7:20 - Walk to the Amtrak station from the MoGo station at Henry Ford Hospital HQ

- Use free WiFi, watch TV, use rest rooms and cool off while waiting on train

BURB Experience: The walk takes you past some very cool Detroit points of pride including the new Piston's Performance Center, the Detroit Children's Museum, the Center for Creative Studies Taubman Center and the very cool art installation in the Cass Avenue Viaduct called "Reflector," the work of artists Becky Nix and Olek Zemplinski.



7:55 - Ride Amtrak Train to the Troy Transit Center

BURB Experience: We bought tickets in advance using the Amtrak website but it wasn't necessary. Besides having an app to purchase tickets there was a helpful ticket agent at the station. The station was clean and cold! The boarding was very efficient—we pulled up our tickets via email and scanned the provided QR codes—and the train was very clean, very uncrowded and actually really nice (better than most commercial jets).

8:30 - Walk to City Hall

BURB Experience: Although SMART bus stops are located all along Maple, the SMART bus app didn't show every stop along the way back into town. We likely could have waited for a bus using a ballpark time estimate, but we opted to walk instead of taking an Uber back to downtown Birmingham. Public transit along Maple between Coolidge and Woodward was a bit unclear.



9:05 - Pedal across the street to Shain Park to enjoy Rueda in the Park (see article in this issue)

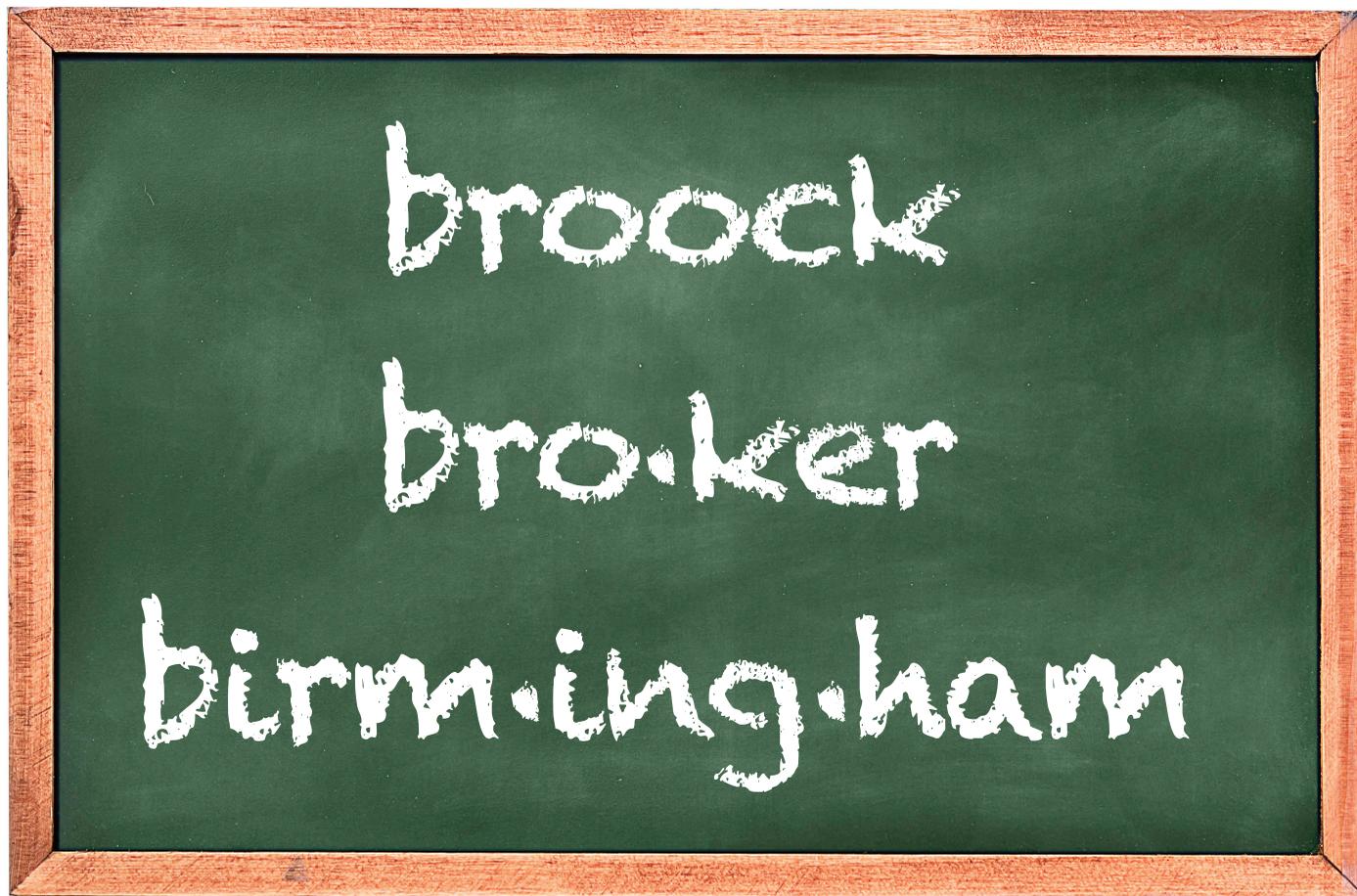
10:00 - Pedal home

BURB Overall Experience: *Micro-Mobility Solutions (scooters, bikes...) were available nearly everywhere we went in Detroit. They were easy to find, easy to use once we figured out the sometimes-confusing apps, and a lot of fun. Enjoying and experiencing downtown Detroit was much more leisurely and engaging on the scooters and bikes than driving a car. Overall, public transit combined with the various micro-mobility solutions proved to be an effective and affordable way to travel the Woodward Corridor and around Downtown Detroit. One potential downside to public transportation is that you do need to coordinate your travel to a known schedule and sometimes the bus/train can be late (our initial bus was a few minutes late but had no real impact on our day). It is also necessary to have a smartphone to use the scooters and bikes. Closer to home, as far as we could tell, the closest scooter or bike share available to Birmingham was the MoGo bike stations in and around the Royal Oak area.*

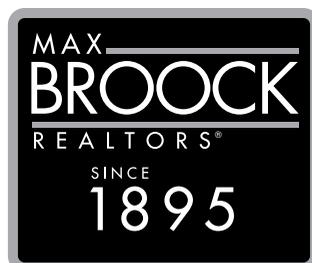
BURB Bottom-line: *We would do it again (and will)! Although there were a few "rookie mistakes," we are confident our next trip will have far fewer issues. It was surprisingly clean, safe, cost effective and fun. It was also somewhat freeing to not have to be responsible for driving and parking a car, especially in an urban environment. We couldn't help to wonder what else our town, Birmingham, can do to support more local public transportation and micro-mobility alternatives. Bike racks at bus stops and covered parking decks? MoGo stations at Troy Transit Center and Downtown Birmingham? Intra-community shuttle? Certainly, our day without a car has our "wheels" turning...*



really, it's elementary



The educated choice in Birmingham



275 S. OLD WOODWARD AVE, BIRMINGHAM, MI 48009

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For the sixth year, Rueda in the Park returned to Shain Park to bring Latin dancing to Birmingham.

Dave Harkcom started the weekly summer event after studying Latin dancing as a hobby.

"I've been dancing for about twelve to fifteen years now. It's something later in life we found--my wife and I do it," Harkcom said. A few years ago, he organized the first Rueda in the Park. "We said, rather than going to clubs when it's nice in the summer, why not try something here? So we did it down in Clawson for a little bit and then we found [Shain Park] and it seemed

to be central for everybody."

Rueda literally means "wheel" in Spanish; it's also the name of a dance in which dancers form a circle and one person calls out commands. As a result, the shape of the circular formation looks like a wheel.

The dancers who come to Rueda in the Park hail from many different parts of the globe and Metro-Detroit community, but Shain Park is the meeting place for them all. Mambo Marci, an acclaimed Latin dance instructor, emphasized the globality of the salsa community.

"If you know part of the salsa community, you know all of it," Mambo Marci said. Several other

dancers agreed.

Harkcom said the dancers met almost every Thursday last summer--clad in masks--and there were no instances of Covid. This year, as Covid restrictions loosen, the dancers are eager to resume participating in Latin dance events. Rueda in the Park is held every Thursday throughout the summer from 7:00 to 10:00 pm. It is free to participate and all levels are welcome: the dancers are happy to share their skills and inspire interest in Latin dancing.

"We do mostly Cuban style music and Cuban style dance. We do a thing called the rueda de casino, which is a Cuban wheel. We'll get a whole group doing that and it's just a lot of fun getting people involved with that," Harkcom said.

According to an event post on Facebook, they also dance timba, salsa, son, bachata, and cha-cha-cha. "There's a core group of folks and we all went to dance school together from time to time. Some come in, some come out. [One person] hasn't been here for a couple of years. She used to dance with us and she got married and had kids, and now her kids are big enough that she can come out from time to time," Harkcom said. "We get a nice diverse group of people that come out."

Harkcom himself taught rueda at Troy Dance Studio after taking dance lessons at Energetic Souls, where several other dancers also studied. Most dance classes have been taught over Zoom during the pandemic, but Rueda in the Park gives hope that the Latin dance scene is returning to normal.

Mambo Marci (mambomarci.com) is a co-director of YA Salsa, an organization that promotes and supports Michigan's salsa dancing community. YA Salsa plans several events, including Salsa Socials and Park & Dance, to celebrate dancing and develop the Latin dance community. Park & Dance supports local businesses while providing an opportunity to dance safely outdoors. On Sunday, July 25, YA Salsa is also hosting their next Salsa Social at the American Polish Cultural Center in Troy. Visit the YA Salsa website, yasalsa.org, for more details about the

organization and additional events.

For those interested in the world of Latin dance, Rueda in the Park in Birmingham is a great place to start. Several dancers, including Harkcom, have traveled to Cuba and participated in dance events there. One woman travels to Cuba several times per year. Another shared that she found a vibrant Latin dance community at the Swiss-German border while living in Germany. Evidently, the salsa and Latin dance communities transcend borders and bring a collection of cultures to Birmingham.





BIRMINGHAM BROKER BRIEF

Stuart Jeffares, MBA, Associate Broker

When The Going Gets Tough: Unconventional House Hunting

The housing market in 2021 has been significantly out of balance with buyers far out numbering sellers. The traditional approach of finding your next home can be discouraging and often unsuccessful. It is times like these that a Buyer's Agent needs to pull out all the stops to help his client get a home. Here are a few strategies that I have successfully utilized in the past.

Off-Market Letters

Writing notes to off-market homes in the target neighborhood may seem like a shot in the dark but remember desperate times call for desperate measures. While the payoff is far from guaranteed, the effort is not substantial and you may find a procrastinating buyer that needs just the nudge your offer provides. Be careful that your letter does not appear to be a shotgun approach to the entire city... but rather the product of very focused due diligence. Your agent should be able to pull addresses and names for any neighborhood, street or block.

Old Inventory

Houses that have had extended stays on the market, for whatever reason, are great sources for potential next homes. Very often these are solid homes that started off significantly overpriced and by the time they course-corrected, they were yesterday's news and not receiving

any attention. Sometimes they are still overpriced but the enticement of a bona fide offer may have them re-evaluating. Another reason for aged inventory can be some sort of imperfection in the home or even that it is severely outdated. At the right price almost any house can be made viable, it just requires patience and using some of the savings from the discounted purchase price to remodel and/or renovate.

In-House Inventory

Often agents will be aware of homes that owners would be willing to sell but for whatever reason they do not want to publicly market the property. The reasons for such a situation are varied; divorce, celebrity, security concerns, privacy, etc. No matter the reason, opportunity exists and the bigger the brokerage likely the more possibilities.

Previously Listed

Many homes that were listed never consummated in a sale. They may have failed an inspection and the seller pulled the house off the market to address the repair and never got around to putting the house back on the MLS. Their contract with an agent may have expired and they haven't yet hired a new agent or they removed the house from the listings for a holiday or family event and have not returned it to the market. Regardless of the reason, we know that at one point in time the homeowner was in the appropriate

mindset to sell their home and may be more easily persuaded to sell if a active and interested buyer were to approach them.

Build

Looking for vacant land to build upon or tear down and build on a desirable lot currently occupied by obsolete house, can be an additional avenue for a house hunter. Also, as confidence improves, there are a growing number of "spec" homes being erected by builders speculating that they can find a willing buyer for their offering. The competition at this part of the market can often be much less as many buyers will not entertain building a new home or buying a home under construction due to impatience or the feeling that the process would be overwhelming.

The Bottom Line: Buyers who are discouraged from starting or continuing a house search might be well served to get creative. Not only will it improve their odds of finding an appropriate property but may decrease their chances of over-paying by avoiding a more competitive situation.

Stuart Jeffares is a Birmingham based Associate Broker and Residential Builder who writes about local market. He welcomes questions and feedback at: TheJeffaresGroup@gmail.com





STRESSED About Selling?

BY EVAN ELSEA

i-Buyer Offers A New Option For Some

Any conversation about real estate these days will likely include stories of homes selling well over asking price in a few days or less, with multiple offers and very favorable terms for the seller. It's been a "seller's market" lately, to say the very least.

A real estate sale is like an iceberg - 90% of it is below the surface. A neighbor, friend or co-worker will share about their home selling for a record price, but the painstaking hours of prep that goes into a sale are often left out. The to-do list can be lengthy, depending on the condition of a home and the level of a seller's motivation. Finding handymen and contractors to make updates and repairs, or spending nights and weekends DIY-ing with a father-in-law or brother can certainly improve value. Though, it requires extra effort, time and money.

After decluttering, staging and listing a home, the seller finally gets to the fun part... accepting the offer! But before the deal is done, there's still a few more hurdles - the buyer's home inspection, appraisal, and hopefully getting to the closing table 30-60 days later. While juggling family life and a job, on top of making one of the largest financial transactions in life, the stress for a seller can pile up quickly.

For most, maximizing the sale proceeds is the most important factor behind the home selling decision. While the best way to sell a home for top dollar is to work with a great real estate agent who can guide the entire process, this isn't always the most practical path for everyone. Job changes, divorces, inherited properties and financial burdens are all things that can make listing a home challenging. Some sellers may not have the means, desire or time to get their home "show ready" to put on the market.

So, what's the alternative? Of course, there's the signs on the side of the road that say, "We will buy your home for cash." Though, sellers should be wary of companies that are looking to buy distressed properties for a large discount. Some of them aren't going to buy the property. Instead, they are going to assign the sales contract to an end buyer and make a large profit as an intermediary.

A new option is the iBuyer. These are tech-based firms that are buying properties in metro areas across the country, although they don't have much of a presence in Michigan, at least not yet. Their business model is focused on making the home selling process easier for the consumer with near-instant offers

and the use of technology to streamline the process. Clearly, not the best match for every seller but it gives a new solution that will satisfy certain sellers.

HouseHop, backed by the largest real estate brokerage in Michigan, the Real Estate One Family of Companies, is an early entrant into the local market that buys homes at a competitive market value. Offers by HouseHop are tailored to the seller's needs and timeline, whether the closing happens in one week or 90 days. This service helps solve the 'selling before buying' dilemma as well, taking the pressure off homeowners who are trying to juggle not one, but two real estate transactions simultaneously.

Leveraging 90 years of experience selling real estate in Michigan, HouseHop knows the value of homes extremely well. Anyone who is considering selling and wants to evaluate the i-Buyer option, can find more information at www.househop.com.

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248-770-1917



Marketing your house in Birmingham?

We might have a match...



Marketing

Your

Birmingham

House

Birmingham

- Resident
- Business owner
- Neighborhood Assoc. Board
- NEXT Board Member

House

- Licensed Home Builder 30+ yrs.
- City Planning Board Member
- Certified Master Gardner

Your

- Google 5-Star Customer Rating
- Zillow 5-Star Customer Rating
- Yelp 5-Star Customer Rating

Marketing

- Marketing BA
- Marketing MBA
- Corporate experience 20+ yrs
- Real Estate experience 8+ yrs.

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