

Houston Moyer
1940 Turner Ave NW, Suite B
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

April 19, 2025

West Grand Neighborhood Association
754 Leonard St NW, Suite B
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear West Grand Board Members:

RE: MATTHEW'S HOUSE SPECIAL LAND USE FOR 1050 LEONARD ST NW

I write to you today to voice my objection for Matthew's House ("MH") moving to 1050 Leonard St NW, and urge you as the "neighborhood's voice" to also object to it. I am a local business owner and owner of the building at 1038 Leonard St NW.

There are many relevant and very serious reasons that Matthew's House should not be approved to move to 1050 Leonard St NW ("Leonard"), and quite frankly issues with them being in their current location.

For details on my position, see below or visit my website at www.SayNoToMatthewsHouse.com.

Police Involvement and Crime

Exhibits A, B, and C

The amount of crime that happens at Matthew's House is unbelievable, as shown by the attached summaries of police calls. Really bad things are happening there, mostly assaults, but other things like drugs, prostitution, weapons, arrests, fights, sex offenders, disorderly people, etc. the list goes on. It's bad enough the current neighbors have to deal with it, but to allow MH to move to Leonard would be furthering the problems, causing issues for the surrounding businesses, and displaying these issues on a main street of our city.

Our legislature has already determined the people that visit Matthew's House are, by nature, disorderly criminals as defined by MCL 750.167(g); being a "vagrant" is a violation of Michigan's Penal Code. The Penal Code prescribes what our state considers criminal activities.

By supporting Matthew's House you would be supporting and allowing criminal activity in our city by sheer definition of the state law.

Matthew's House has been as bold as to allow school groups, like Jenison Christian Schools, to come volunteer at MH... Pastor George said at the first meeting, that they had a good working relationship with Stocking Elementary School prior to the school closing. But are parents aware that there are currently two sex offenders registered to Matthew's House address?! These sex offenders are convicted of doing horrible things involving children. Why on earth would an

organization who has known and registered sex offenders invite school aged children into or near their organization? That would be the equivalent of a school knowingly hiring a sex offender to work inside of the school. Absolutely sickening.

Matthew's House has about 125-150 regular people through the doors daily, according to Pastor George, if we look at their police calls on a per capita basis and compare it to the total number of police calls for the entire west side on a per capita basis, there is **650% MORE** crime that happens at Matthew's House than the entire west side service area. If that doesn't say it all, I'm not sure what does.

If you take the total number of GRPD calls (339) and calculate that over every calendar day for that time period (1/6/2024 – 3/15/2025 – 434 days) that's 0.78 police calls per day! Now, MH is only open 5 days a week, so if you average that over just "working days" (310 days) you will see they average a staggering **1.09 police calls** PER DAY that they are open. What other residence or business do you know of that averages one police call per day?! Imagine how many dollars of taxpayer money that is consuming because Matthew's House attracts these people and then can't control them.

Current Neighbors of Matthew's House

Exhibit D

The majority of neighbors that currently live near Matthew's House report that they are not good neighbors. Here are some of the highlights from a survey we did:

- 55% of respondents say Matthew's House is **not** a good neighbor; and another 18% are undecided.
- 73% of respondents say Matthew's House causes loitering issues for the neighborhood.
- 54% of respondents say Matthew's House causes traffic issues (on the road and/or sidewalks) for the neighborhood; and another 18% are undecided.
- When asked if respondents feel **safe** in their neighborhood with Matthew's House nearby, 45% **strongly** disagreed, 9% disagreed, and another 9% were undecided. This means that 63% of the respondents did **not** feel safe or were undecided how they felt.

Comments from the survey are attached as an exhibit. These are real people, with real thoughts and concerns, with real insight into how Matthew's House is as a neighbor currently. These responses were prior to any of the actual data being compiled on how often and the seriousness of the crimes that occur at MH, imagine what the results would be like now.

What the "Leonard" Neighbors Want

Exhibit E

In October of 2024, in hopes to gain insights for my own building, I conducted a survey of the neighbors surrounding 1038 Leonard St NW to see what types of businesses they wanted to see in the building. This survey helped me determine a) what I should do with the building, b) who I should lease the building to, and/or c) which business I should open in the space. I had well over

100 responses and the results were extremely valuable and I have now made them public as a result of Matthew's House trying to move in next door. The comments are attached as an exhibit, but to summarize the results:

- Overwhelmingly, the respondents want to see food options, general retail and family friendly businesses
- 16% for sit down/full-service dining
- 15% for a coffee shop
- 13% for general retail stores
- The summary of the specific comments is:
 - Family-friendly is a MUST
 - Something affordable and fitting with the "west side vibes"
 - No chain restaurants – the neighbors want "mom and pop" type places
 - Something easy and safe to walk or bike to
 - No more weed/cannabis stores
 - Businesses that are safe and help keep the area safe

The neighbors are wanting something vibrant and something to be proud of. Something that connects each other in a positive way, and ultimately somewhere they can bring their family, friends, and kids to without feeling unsafe.

In closing, the areas right along Leonard St on both sides of the road are intended to be for business uses, businesses that help make the neighborhood and community more vibrant. The west side is improving all the time, and to attract and maintain businesses that families want to go to, you cannot support organizations like Matthew's House moving in. No one is disputing that Matthew's House has a purpose somewhere for someone, but with their current issues and track record, its location does not belong on Leonard St. and further does not belong anywhere close to a neighborhood of homeowners, renters, families, and ultimately people who are proud to live on the west side. In life, one of the best indicators for future performance is past performance, and Matthew's House has a long history of causing issues for the neighborhood they are currently in; don't let them do it to another neighborhood.

I strongly urge you to do the right thing, say no to crime and drugs, say no to endangering our families and children, and say no to Matthew's House; please support us in strongly OPPOSING the special land use that Matthew's House has applied for.

Sincerely,

Houston Moyer
(616) 499-4008

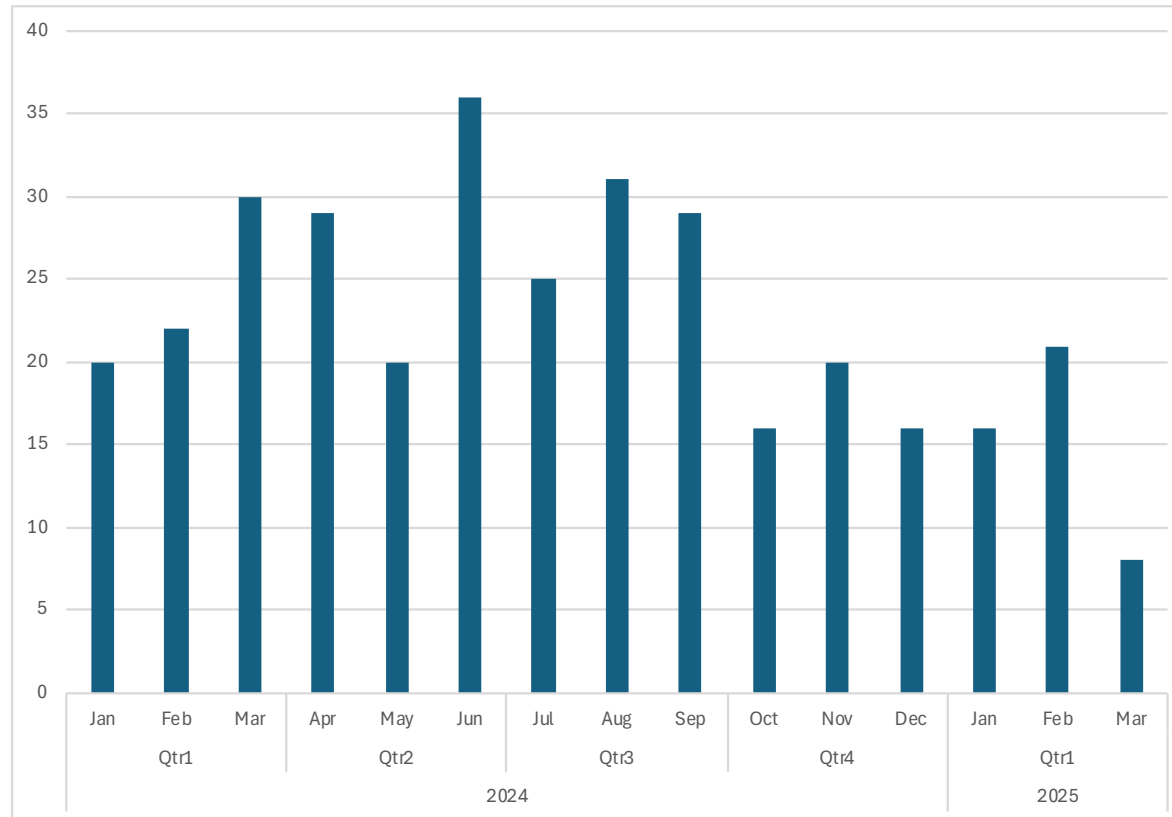
Enclosures

SENT VIA EMAIL AND U.S. MAIL

GRPD Call Log - Summary of Calls for Service - Matthew's House

1/6/2024 through 3/15/2025

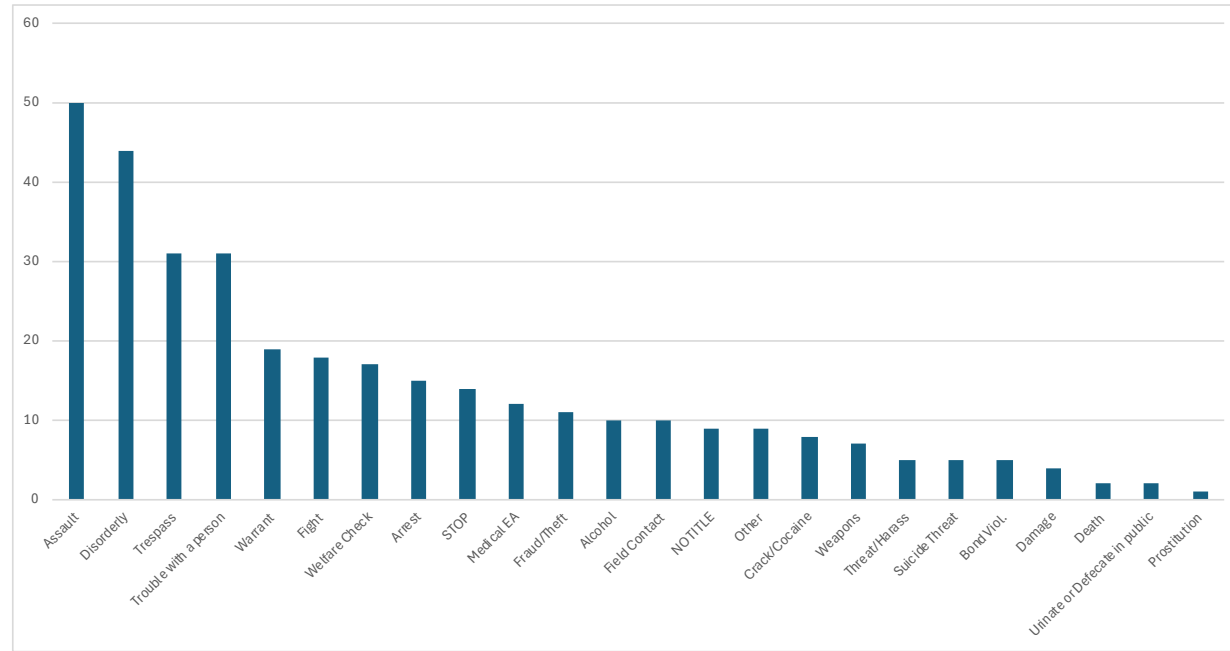
Row Labels	Count of Inc. Number
2024	294
Qtr1	72
Jan	20
Feb	22
Mar	30
Qtr2	85
Apr	29
May	20
Jun	36
Qtr3	85
Jul	25
Aug	31
Sep	29
Qtr4	52
Oct	16
Nov	20
Dec	16
2025	45
Qtr1	45
Jan	16
Feb	21
Mar	8
Grand Total	339



GRPD Call Log by Type of Call - Matthew's House 1/6/2024 through 3/15/2025

EXHIBIT B

Row Labels	Count of Inc. Number
Assault	50
Disorderly	44
Trespass	31
Trouble with a person	31
Warrant	19
Fight	18
Welfare Check	17
Arrest	15
STOP	14
Medical EA	12
Fraud/Theft	11
Alcohol	10
Field Contact	10
NO TITLE	9
Other	9
Crack/Cocaine	8
Weapons	7
Threat/Harass	5
Suicide Threat	5
Bond Viol.	5
Damage	4
Death	2
Urinate or Defecate in public	2
Prostitution	1
Grand Total	339



SUMMARY OF MICHIGAN PENAL CODE

MCL 750.167 defines what a disorderly person is. By one mere definition then almost ALL, and for sure the overwhelming majority of the people going to Matthew's House ARE by law considered disorderly people. The lawmakers and legislature have purposely

750.167(g) defines "a vagrant" as disorderly.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines "vagrant" as ***"That wanders from place to place without a settled home or regular work, sleeping rough and living by asking for money or food; homeless."***

What Matthew's House is attempting to do is bring more disorderly people and more crime to the neighborhood!

THE MICHIGAN PENAL CODE (EXCERPT)

Act 328 of 1931

750.167 Disorderly person; subsequent violations by person convicted of refusing or neglecting to support family; breastfeeding or expressing breast milk exempt.

Sec. 167. (1) A person is a disorderly person if the person is any of the following:

- (a) A person of sufficient ability who refuses or neglects to support his or her family.
 - (b) A common prostitute.
 - (c) A window peeper.
 - (d) A person who engages in an illegal occupation or business.
 - (e) A person who is intoxicated in a public place and who is either endangering directly the safety of another person or of property or is acting in a manner that causes a public disturbance.
 - (f) A person who is engaged in indecent or obscene conduct in a public place.
 - (g) A vagrant.
 - (h) A person found begging in a public place.
 - (i) A person found loitering in a house of ill fame or prostitution or place where prostitution or lewdness is practiced, encouraged, or allowed.
 - (j) A person who knowingly loiters in or about a place where an illegal occupation or business is being conducted.
 - (k) A person who loiters in or about a police station, police headquarters building, county jail, hospital, court building, or other public building or place for the purpose of soliciting employment of legal services or the services of sureties upon criminal recognizances.
 - (l) A person who is found jostling or roughly crowding people unnecessarily in a public place.
- (2) If a person who has been convicted of refusing or neglecting to support his or her family under this section is charged with subsequent violations within a period of 2 years, that person shall be prosecuted as a second offender or third and subsequent offender as provided in section 168, if the family of that person is then receiving public relief or support.
- (3) A mother's breastfeeding of a child or expressing breast milk does not constitute indecent or obscene conduct under subsection (1) regardless of whether or not her areola or nipple is visible during or incidental to the breastfeeding or expressing of breast milk.

History: 1931, Act 328, Eff. Sept. 18, 1931;—Am. 1939, Act 84, Eff. Sept. 29, 1939;—CL 1948, 750.167;—Am. 1956, Act 110, Eff. Aug. 11, 1956;—Am. 1964, Act 144, Eff. Aug. 28, 1964;—Am. 1969, Act 328, Eff. Mar. 20, 1970;—Am. 1974, Act 340, Eff. Jan. 1, 1977;—Am. 1977, Act 109, Eff. Jan. 15, 1978;—Am. 2014, Act 199, Imd. Eff. June 24, 2014.

Former law: See section 1 of Act 264 of 1889, being How., § 1997a; CL 1897, § 5923; CL 1915, § 7774; CL 1929, § 9090; and Act 35 of 1927.

THE MICHIGAN PENAL CODE (EXCERPT)
Act 328 of 1931

750.168 Disorderly person; penalty.

Sec. 168. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), a person convicted of being a disorderly person is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 90 days or a fine of not more than \$500.00, or both.

(2) A person convicted of being a disorderly person under section 167d is guilty of a felony punishable as follows:

(a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), by imprisonment for not more than 2 years or a fine of not more than \$5,000.00, or both.

(b) If the person was previously convicted of violating section 167d, by imprisonment for not more than 4 years or a fine of not more than \$10,000.00, or both.

History: 1931, Act 328, Eff. Sept. 18, 1931;—CL 1948, 750.168;—Am. 1965, Act 320, Eff. Mar. 31, 1966;—Am. 2006, Act 150, Eff. Aug. 22, 2006.

Former law: See section 2 of Act 264 of 1889, being How., § 1997a-1; CL 1897, § 5924; CL 1915, § 7775; CL 1929, § 9091; Act 190 of 1895; Act 82 of 1909; and Act 35 of 1927.

Answers
The people running the organization are great, kind and courteous. With that being said, we genuinely did not know what Mathews house did before purchasing our home. If we did know, we likely would not have bought so close to Mathews house. Almost every day there is some disturbance during their lunch hour where people are fighting. There is very frequently people loitering around the area. People walk directly into traffic at the intersection which can be very dangerous. At multiple points there have been people living in their cars in front of our home so they can utilize their services offered.
Its great thing for the neighborhood. Does it cause more people to be around? yes. Does the good far out weigh the minuscule bad? ABSOLUTELY. The only issue we've ever had regarding the people who go there, is one time someone parked in our driveway, that's it. Id feel less safe without Matthews House right there, honestly.
I am a non-resident property owner, so don't have very much information to answer. Thank you for reaching out though.
They provide food and shelter much needed to the neighborhood but it seems like they need a bigger building to better service them. The people that go there usually don't cause disturbances they go do what they have to do and then they're gone
They're always leaving garbage, that we have to pick up after
I believe they provide a good and needed service, but the location is problematic on such a main street and an intersection known for many accidents. the building itself is also not suited for the services provided. it would be better suited in a building designed to provide and manage for their size of groups; not in a converted house where they ""just make it work"".
I own Homes around and this place brings a lot of drugs and the bad people. Needs to GO The Homeless Have bothered my tenants frequently.

Answers
Police the area. schaaf
Wouldn't mind another Chinese buffet. It would also be nice to have a small hardware store here instead of having to go to Fulton or 3 mile.
A legitimate business/s would be nice. Tired of things looking not professional in that area. Small business are great.
Not another Drug shop or Bar.
It would be great to see a true third space for the community. I understand the need to make this into a business so money can be made off the investment but having a place where I can go and commune with my community without being pressured to spend money would be amazing
We don't need any more smoke shops, headshops, thrift stores or pawnshops. We really need places that can serve the neighborhood and families.
I think it was a shame the way you treated the former tenants. They were a small ""mom and pop"" business with roots in the neighborhood and were successful until you drove them out by doubling the rent. I hope it costs you one hundred times the amount you had originally planned to renovate, and I hope your new tenant will make life miserable for you!
I live 6 houses down and enjoyed the buffet. I would like another restaurant in the building.
We need another restaurant around here we have lots of good memories of restaurants that were here before and too many that used to be on Leonard Street are gone
The west side really needs walkable, pedestrian friendly retail and food options. There's no real coffee shop on Leonard.
We would love to have a coffee shop within walking distance or more good options!
This area has fast food, and gas stations. The community could benefit from family friendly businesses and a quiet coffee cafe.
Thanks so much for asking for feedback. We love where we live!!
Just glad something else will be replacing the former business!
GoodWill Store is needed on the Westside.
Attract the walking crowd and morning people heading to work.
No pot stores Brewery
Please not a chain
I would definately like something for the neighborhood - please NO MORE CANNABIS shops!!!! How about an ALDI? haha - in our dreams, right? :-) Coffee shop/ book store would be cool... please no more cheap, chain stores selling cheap crap.

Answers
I would like you to add a second story that would contain one or two apartments. We need housing, but even better, crime is reduced dramatically when people live above retail. Folks don't usually transgress when they think someone may be watching. PS The age option doesn't respond when I type.
No more weed or alcohol! The neighborhood has enough addiction problems already.
I understand this is a challenging location. I think we're missing a coffee shop or cafe to not only bring neighbors together but others from outside the area. I wasn't able to add my age. I am 67 and have lived in the area for 30 years.
This area needs things for the everyday person, not upscaled bars and eateries like there are on Bridge St
Age: 43. The blank wouldn't allow me to enter the number for some reason. No more marijuana stores please. I would definitely go to a smaller grocery store if prices were comparable to Meijer/Wal-Mart. A local brand coffee shop would be good (Wealthy Bakery has my favorite coffee), or a store that carries Grand Rapids/Michigan brands of groceries/other goods. I also miss Arnie's, so a local sit-down family restaurant with take-out options would be nice.
Very hopeful that this space can become a family type restaurant. Since Arnie's and Lannings closed, there isn't a good full service place to eat in our neighborhood. Or even a coffee and sandwich shop. The block above wouldn't seem to take my age - 73. I worked across Leonard Street at the church and also worked for both Arnie's and Lannings for many years. I appreciate a good nearby place to eat, as so many of my friends and neighbors. Thank you for sending a survey!
Whatever this becomes, safe bike lanes on Leonard and through the west grand neighborhood as a whole will bring more people there.
I am worried about parking space in the area. Entertainment sounds like an interesting idea as well, but I would be worried about late-night noise levels. I would love to see something that provided entertainment from 12pm-9pm or something like that.
Something family friendly, non political, non agenda, etc
Please be family friendly, please be family friendly, please be family friendly... We don't need more weed shops or bars.
Also - why can I only type ""1"" or ""2"" in the age box?
That location is very close to the library and a housing development so something family-friendly is very important.
Please no more dispensaries, there's already so many!
It was nice having a dine-in restaurant in the neighborhood. I hope that if that is the choice that it's affordable for the community in which it serves.
I've been in my home near this site for 20+ years and it has been an eyesore since Blimpies closed. Any update is appreciated-
They already built apartments on Leonard and more coming across the street. I live very close to the apartments on Leonard. You people charge to park in the lots and many do not! Where do they park? In front of all these tax paying home owners houses. Wait until

Answers
odd even parking starts the first of November! Yes City owns the street, I have lived here for 38 years and have always parked in front of my house, now I don't dare leave or my spot is gone! 90% of these homes don't have driveways, some no garages. Plus I have a state license for daycare and my parents now walk half a block or more sometimes with a child, diaper bag and sometimes car seats just to come in my door because there is no where to park. You charge for parking to make your pocket book full! So NO, no more damn apartments
The Leonard Street corridor is in desperate need of revitalization. Let's get some thriving retail businesses going there, please.
I just want to say that as a member of this community I appreciate being asked what our needs are. I'm excited to see the resurgence of Leonard Street and how the area develops to fit the needs of our community members. One thing about the Westside is that we are loyal!
More policing
Would love a place to grab lunch and a beer and be able to walk home
A local-focused space always seems like a good idea as opposed to a chain restaurant or retail. Eco-conscious and affordable for the existing neighbors/community members is important, too.
We would like the previous Chinese restaurant back.
We miss our great family Chinese food we had there !!!
We would love a new restaurant close by. Quite a few restaurants have shut down the last couple years all around here
I would take another Chinese restaurant!
No fast food national chains in this spot! Hoping for something local/small business/michigan based
We really need to get this part of the west side cleaned up and looking nice! Thank you!
I own a house in Westside Connection. What we don't need is another bar or weed shop. I WFH and I'm not aware of a coffee shop I could walk to. That would be perfect! No drive through. Brings more cars playing loud music late at night. We already have enough of that on Leonard.
With the closure of both Arnie's and The Landing, a causal family dining restaurant is needed in the neighborhood. It could have table service or be more in line with a "Panera Bread" model.
The Westside needs a 24 hour diner/breakfast place for bar crowd and those who like to go for some food later.
We need a bus route going east and west on Michigan/Bridge St
Thank you for taking care of the Westside!
Bring Back The Great Wall ... I miss it

Answers
We have a lot of apartment dwellers in the area now that want to walk somewhere for breakfast or coffee. Arnie's is absolutely terrible, we need a better option.
We need more sit down nice restaurants on Leonard Street. Think of bridge at but we more nicer restaurants! The more foot traffic the better. A good coffee shop would do great as well.
Thank you for getting input of those in the neighborhood.
How about not building anything higher than the houses around it and having appropriate off street parking.
Move the Mexican restaurant across from Mr Car Wash on Leonard NW
Something child oriented that is indoors would be nice
Not another weed shop, please!
Leonard needs an elevated and healthy foods restaurant. Either quick service or sit down. Salads, wraps, healthy food!
I think we need to look at places like Eastown and kinda copy what they have going on. I've lived in the west side for close to 20 years. And its just blah. We are all poor here. But we don't need to look it! Dress for the job you want not the job you have do to speak. Lets get some book stores, high end breakfast spots (but a nice price point), clothing stores. That sort of thing.
A nice family sit downn
Need different places to eat that will be a staple to the west side like the old red lion or mr. fables was.
The (good) westside restaurants are always packed, especially during the weekends it can be difficult to find a table without a long wait. We need more!
Food has always been popular on the west side I love to see more of it !!
We elders need a good place to hang out since big boy closed. This has convenient parking. There are very few businesses, catering to older people, and many of us have time and money to spend!
The West side is lacking affordable and manageable (size wise) eateries. Something that speaks to our community of people. Diverse, but sorta plain like white bread. I'd personally love something spicy and fun, but it won't fly. So why not support the local folks?
A small grocery store but not a party store.
We live in the neighborhood and would like to see more food options.
The thing I care most about seeing on Leonard Street is small, locally owned businesses, and those are the businesses where I spend my money
I and pretty every much other westsider I've spoken about this topic to strongly dislikes whoever bought this property and priced out the

Answers
former tenant. Seriously trash behavior.
Please no cannabis shops, no re-sale, no beer/liquor, no sporting anything, just a nice sit down sandwich coffee place with airy pleasant feel. Walkable. Secure lighting, clean, westside proud gathering for normal residents.
Would love to see West Leonard become more pedestrian and cyclist friendly and have more green infrastructure.
West MI seems to have good people
I wouldn't mind another Chinese restaurant. I miss the New Great Wall
Turn it back into Oriental Forrest like it was in the 90s. Turn the ""short stop"" back into a Blimpies Sub shop like it was in the 90s.
It is important to bring local entrepreneurs into the west side, to support locally.
A destination place
Hi there! We have been living here on the NW side over 29 years. It's been safe and calm, but the city let open up the bar behind us. Called Playpub and since then, we saw men's peeing behind the bar, that's facing my kitchen and visible on my backyard! My 3rd child is growing up here and seeing this behavior is awful. We had car tire thrown our backyard, backpack, beer bottles, cans, glasses! When I called the police they told me to return those bottles and they can't do anything! Shame on them! Also we had a cannabis store opened recently! What a shame! How can you let opened these nasty stores open in a residential area?? Whatever you decide to open, make sure not hazardous for our young kids!
Chow hound pet store
Family friendly activities/gym for kids
Would love the Chinese restaurant back!
No more bars or breweries
in answer to your most recent postcard sent out: ""a club to relax and be social. With hot tubs, saunas, co-working,..."" this sound weird - who want to work and be in a hot tub at the same time. Please tell me this isn't some cannabis social spot?!! it does not sound like a good idea and definately not something that would interest the demographics in this area. Perhaps something a little more practical? A gym/ coffee shop? an indoor playplace/grocery/ social space would be especially neat for winter and rainy months. There are a lot of kids around here.