

A MICHIGAN DOCUMENTARY

SMALL TOWN

EXIT 137

A documentary story rooted in Howell,
Michigan

Big stories. One small town.



THE PREMISE

A title anchored to the road into Howell

EXIT 137 anchors the film to the I-96 exit for Howell.

An inspirational Michigan town with a mighty presence, told through three historical figures tied to Howell.

Title concept for EXIT 137.



THREE LIVES. ONE COMMUNITY.

The historical spine of EXIT 137

ABRAHAM LOSFORD

A brave enslaved person who escaped from Kentucky.

GEORGE JEWETT

An athlete who broke barriers 50 years before Jackie Robinson.

LULU CHILDERS

A vanguard in American music, with a lifetime connection to Howell.

Historical descriptions reflect published accounts.



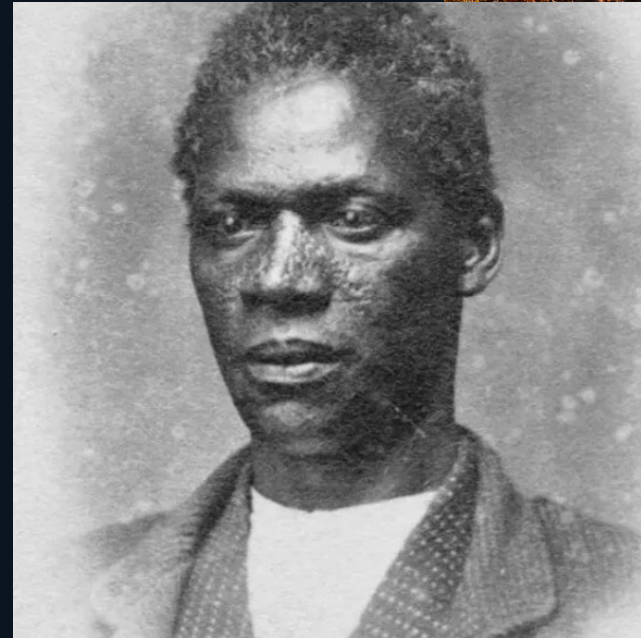
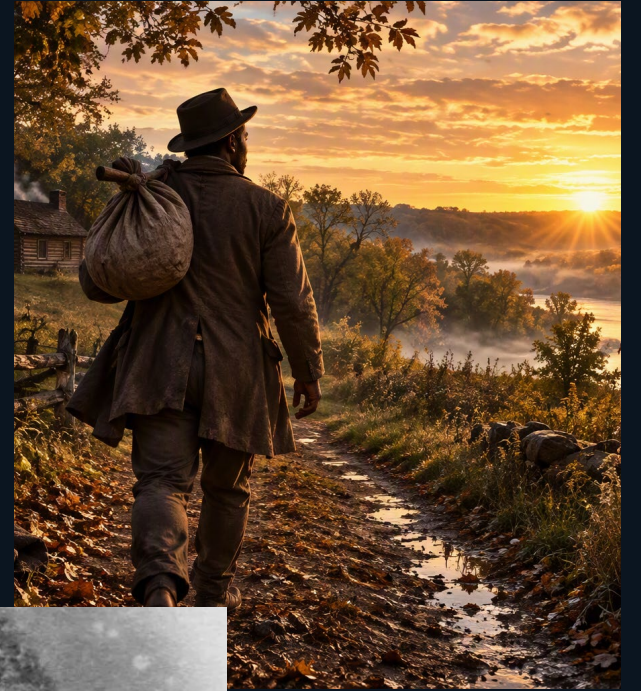
COURAGE

Abraham Losford

A story of escape, survival, and a connection to a Michigan small town.

Losford escaped slavery in Kentucky and is among the extraordinary figures connected to Howell. Exit 137 became his home, and his story is one of bravery, compassion, and endurance.

Visual is illustrative, not a historical likeness.



BREAKING BARRIERS

George Jewett

Athletic achievement becomes a lens on history, persistence, and belonging.

Jewett broke barriers 50 years before Jackie Robinson, and his story connects to Howell. A story about a man ahead of his time who's impact in this small town laid dormant under the stage of the Howell Historic Opera House for 120 years before rediscovered.

Visual is illustrative, not a historical likeness.



A VOICE THROUGH MUSIC

LuLu Childers

Music, leadership, and cultural influence broaden the story beyond a single place.

Childers was a vanguard in American music who likely inspired Dr. King's Lincoln Memorial speech. She was a lifetime resident of Howell and loved this town. She forever rests in the Historic and beautiful Lakeview Cemetery.

Visual is illustrative, not a historical likeness.



STANDING AGAINST HATE

Howell in the early 1990s

A small community took a stand against a national issue.

When the Ku Klux Klan tried to claim Howell as its own, the community pushed back. Even when the courts said the Klan had the right to speak, the city made sure there were no ears to listen.

That moment still rings true today: see the details of how this community swept and mopped the stains of hate off the steps and walkways of Howell. Today Howell continues to be an incredible and welcoming community and has twice been recognized as America's Greatest Main Street and Downtown in America.

Detroit Free Press, early 1990s. Photo: John Luke.



AN EXIT INTO HISTORY

One exit. three lives, and many stories.

PAST TO FUTURE

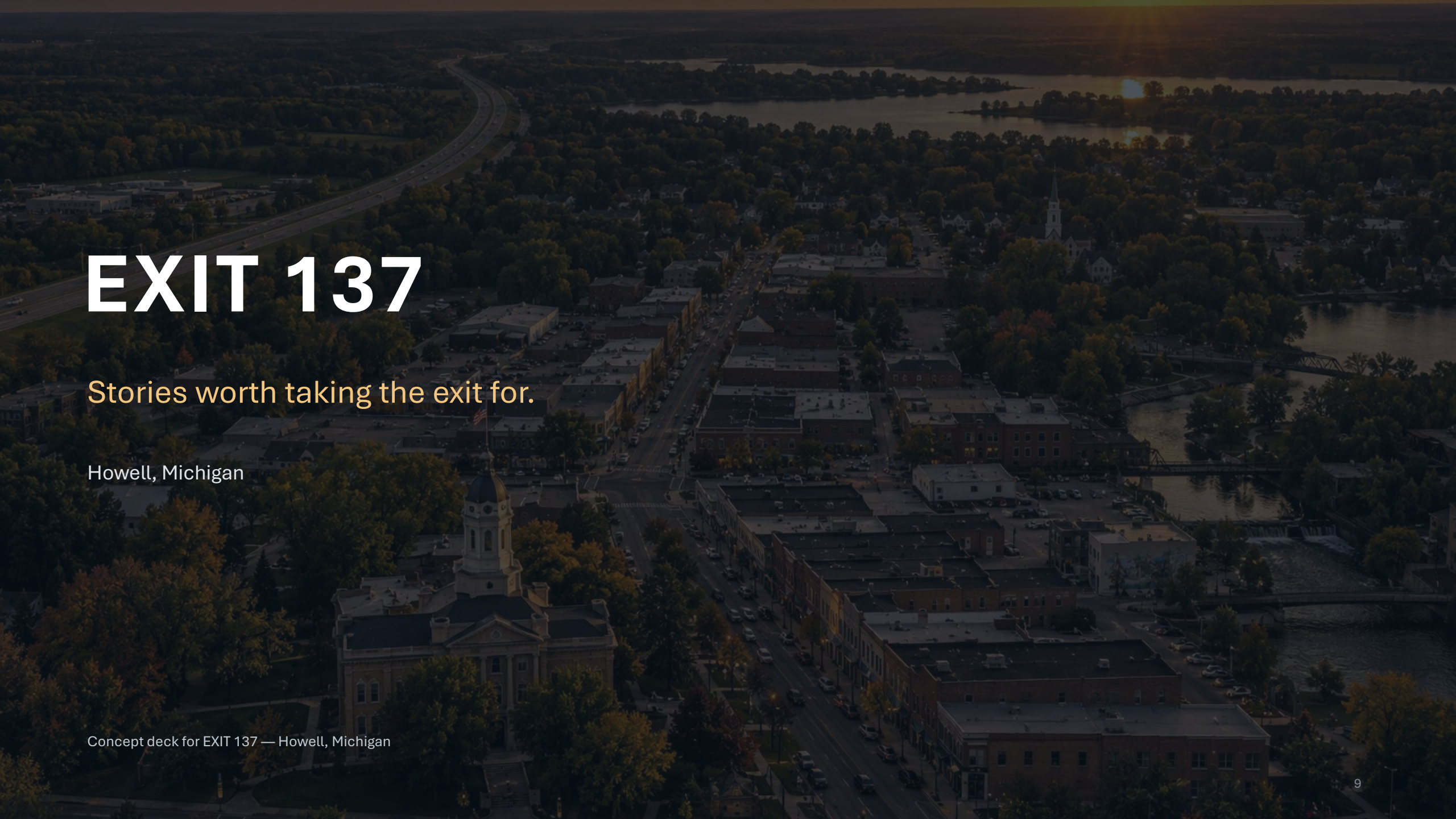
EXIT 137 is an exit into history: take the ramp and the past still speaks, the present is lived, and the future is being written.

How the story unfolds

The past surfaces lives Howell nearly forgot. The present meets those carrying the stories now. The future asks what the town becomes next.

A framing device for EXIT 137.



An aerial photograph of Howell, Michigan, taken at sunset. The image shows a dense residential and commercial area with many trees in shades of green and yellow. A large, multi-lane highway (EXIT 137) curves through the upper left portion of the frame. In the foreground, a large, light-colored building with a prominent dome and classical architectural features is visible. To the right, a river or lake flows through the landscape, with a bridge crossing it. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the entire scene.

EXIT 137

Stories worth taking the exit for.

Howell, Michigan

Concept deck for EXIT 137 — Howell, Michigan