

SOUTHAMPTON (7)

LOCATION

Located in Southwest City, Southampton is bound by Chippewa to the north, south Kingshighway to the east, Eichelberger to the south, and Hampton to the west.

HISTORY

Southampton was a mixture of farms and estates that remained rural in character through the nineteenth century, despite conversion of the Christy Estate to the east into clay mines. Everard Horton's farm occupied most of Southampton. Devonshire is named after his original hometown in England, and there are other English-derived street names.



With the extension of the Cherokee and new Southampton streetcar lines, a small business strip and subdivision platting resulted about the loop at Macklind and Devonshire in the early twentieth century. Wherry Avenue, cutting Southampton's blocks diagonally, is actually the former location of the creek by the same name.

The amelioration of the automobile and layout of St. Louis Hills nearby resulted in post-war commercial growth along Hampton. Along this booming new strip, Hampton Village Market opened as a unique venue with off-street parking and one-stop shopping. Since its opening in 1939, subsequent buildings have been added and later renovated, all in the uniquely colonial-style that now defines the Hampton-Chippewa Business Association.

CHARACTERISTICS

Southampton shares its eastern and western boundaries with other neighborhoods on major arteries where the regional shopping districts of Southtown and Hampton Village are located. In addition to these commercial centers, more neighborhood-oriented businesses can be found at the heart of the neighborhood along Macklind. These small businesses include everything in site-services, from a grocer to a pet groomer. Aside from its heavily commercial edges and small-business core, a few homes along Chippewa and South Kingshighway have been converted into businesses.

Accompanying its strong commercial base, Southampton is best known for its numerous blocks of owner-occupied single-family homes. The neighborhood also supports a series of four-family flats and garden apartments along Chippewa, as well as single-level duplexes along Chippewa and other scattered sites. Apartments are concentrated near the northeast corner of the neighborhood near Southtown businesses. Though primarily owner-occupied, a limited



number of single-family homes are rented. Rental units are mostly in the four-family flats and apartments.



INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

While other neighborhoods are served by multiple neighborhood associations staking claim to subareas or overlays, Southampton's boundaries as defined by the City are those retained by the Southampton Neighborhood Association. The organization works continuously to identify problem properties and works closely with Magdalen Housing Corporation and area business associations. St. Mary of Magdalen is the dominant parish in the neighborhood and operates a nonprofit housing corporation.

Two business associations work independently in Southampton. Hampton–Chippewa

Business Association and South Kingshighway Businessmen Association work to maintain the occupancy, maintenance, and cleanliness of their areas on the edges of the neighborhood. Working most closely with the neighborhood association, Macklind Business Association struggles yet prevails in keeping the mom-and-pop stores alive and well in the heart of Southampton.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Recently, Manzo's Importers, a family-owned specialty foods shop, reopened its business at Devonshire and Macklind. The building, in which Manzo's is located, received façade improvements. Many of the small businesses at the heart of this currently stable neighborhood could use façade improvements, such as Manzo's, to ensure their continued viability. All the businesses are locally owned and operated and most closely serve area residents.

Another portion of the neighborhood needing special attention is that part of Southtown within its boundaries. The Avalon Theater needs major gut-rehabbing and could be the site of a community playhouse or concert venue. All the businesses along South Kingshighway at Chippewa need more parking, yet their continued use as retail businesses with mostly pedestrian clientele should not be harmed in the process of adding more parking. Small parking lots between businesses are not currently a viable option since vacant businesses are mostly located away from the most frequented businesses. One option may be to reserve some of the neighboring former Famous-Barr lot for landscaped public parking.

Though Macklind façade improvements and overall Southtown revitalization are most crucial to Southampton's future, the neighborhood, like any other, could use tree-lined streets, especially along its northern blocks where multifamily units are found. Additionally, plantings should even be considered now for southern blocks to ease the transition from aging mature trees to new trees.