

Janice M. Winfrey  
City Clerk

**City of Detroit**  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

Andre P. Gilbert II  
Deputy City Clerk

**DEPARTMENT PETITION REFERENCE COMMUNICATION**

*To: The Department or Commission Listed Below*

*From: Janice M Winfrey, Detroit City Clerk*

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The following petition is herewith referred to you for report and recommendation to the City Council.

In accordance with that body's directive, kindly return the same with your report in duplicate within four (4) weeks.

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Petition No.	2025-014 (District)
Name of Petitioner	Baobab Fare
Description of Petition	Petition request for a Commercial Facilities Exemption District at 16900 E. Warren Ave., Detroit, MI 48224.
Type of Petition	<b>Tax Abatement for a Commercial Facilities Exemption District</b>
Submission Date	01/30/2025
Concerned Departments	Finance Department, Planning and Development Department, Housing and Revitalization Department, Legislative Policy Division, City Planning Commission
Petitioner Contact	Baobab Fare Mamba Hamissi 275 Lothrop Rd Groose Pointe Farms, MI 48236 P: (313) 266-5199 <a href="mailto:mamba@baobabfare.com">mamba@baobabfare.com</a>

**January 13, 2025**

Detroit City Council  
Coleman A. Young Municipal Center  
2 Woodward Ave Suite 1340  
Detroit, MI 48226

RE: Request for the Establishment of a Commercial Facilities Exemption District at  
16900 E. Warren Ave.

Honorable City Council:

Please accept this letter as a request to establish a Commercial Facilities Exemption Development District for the property located at **16900 E. Warren Ave., Detroit, MI 48224** and described on Attachment A.

This project is eligible for a PA 255 tax incentive as it meets the definition of a restoration project according to MCL 207.654. There will be a major renovation (exceeding 10% of the property's true cash value) to restore the property to an economically efficient condition.

Baobab Fare is a restaurant business with one existing location at 6568 Woodward Avenue. The business was founded by Mamba Hamissi and Nadia Nijimbere and started operating in early 2021. The restaurant's specialty is East African cuisine and is a beloved community fixture and destination.

The project involves the rehabilitation of a vacant commercial building in order to open a second Baobab Fare location. The restoration work will be extensive. It will involve the demolition of existing interior elements, the repair of the exterior façade, the addition of new interior finishes and doors/windows, the installation of commercial-grade kitchen equipment, the installation of new furnishings for restaurant operation, and the upgrade of HVAC, plumbing, and electrical components of the building.

The restoration will not be undertaken without the receipt of an exemption certificate. As the feasibility of the project currently stands, the project cannot be financed without an exemption. The estimated future property taxes (after restoration) without an exemption would not allow the property to maintain reasonable operating expenses and these high expenses would make it infeasible for any small business operator to finance and then occupy the building.

The current number of full-time employees is 25 and the number of part-time employees is 10. The new location would create 15 new full-time jobs and 15 new part-time jobs.

The total restoration project cost will be \$1.6M (not including the price of kitchen equipment) and will involve the transformation of a vacant commercial building into a East-African restaurant an already-proven successful concept.

The tax exemption is being requested for a period of 12 years.

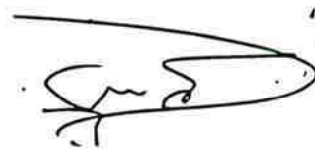
The exemption supports the economic feasibility of the investment which, in turn, provides economic advantages to the City of Detroit. Generally, the project will (a) increase the number of visitors to the area and boost the visibility of neighboring businesses. It will also (b) create jobs by employing restaurant staff and (c) create new construction jobs through the work undertaken. The creation of these jobs will (d) generate more local and state income tax revenue.

The city taxes are current. The exemption will allow the restoration process to commence and therefore allow the property to be in a functional state and produce far more property tax revenue in the future (after the period of the exemption) than in its current vacant state.

This project is also seeking the assistance of grant funds from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and its Build MI Community program, grant funds from the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) and its Motor City Match program, and Strategic Neighborhood Fund dollars from Invest Detroit.

Baobab Fare is committed to providing excellent service and continuing to be a positive fixture and contributor in the communities in which it operates. For further information, please contact Mamba Hamissi at (313) 266-5199 or [mamba@baobabfare.com](mailto:mamba@baobabfare.com).

Respectfully submitted,



**Mamba Hamissi, Founder**  
Baobab Fare  
(313) 266-5199  
[mamba@baobabfare.com](mailto:mamba@baobabfare.com)

**Attachment A: Site Map that includes the parcel(s) of property / Legal Description**



- **General Description of Facility:**
  - ***Year Built:*** 1956
  - ***Original Use:*** Retail Store
  - ***Most Recent Use:*** During abandonment, property was used as an illegal grow operation for the past 10 years. Prior to abandonment, the facility was used for tax preparation services and as a video rental store.
  - ***Number of Stories:*** 1
  - ***Square Footage:*** 3,104 square feet
- **General Description of Current and Proposed Use:**
  - ***Current Use:*** Vacant
  - ***Proposed Use:*** Restaurant establishment
- **Description of Restoration:**
  - The facility will undergo significant interior and exterior renovations, including the installation of a new kitchen, dining area, and market space. The façade will be restored to enhance the building's historical character while ensuring it meets modern building standards.
- **List of Fixed Building Equipment:**
  - Commercial-grade kitchen equipment
  - New interior furnishings including shelving, countertops, bar area, and banquette seating
  - Updated HVAC equipment



- Plumbing upgrades
  - Electrical upgrades
  - New doors
  - New windows
  - New flooring
  - New signage
- **Project Time Schedule:**
  - *Building Purchased:* 03/28/2023
  - *Financing Secured:* Q2 2025
  - *Restoration Start:* Q2 2025
  - *Restoration Completion:* Q4 2025
  - *Restaurant Grand Opening:* Q1 2026
- **Parcel ID:** 21002284
- **Legal Description:**
  - S-E WARREN AVE 508&509 EASTERN HEIGHTS LAND COS SUB NO 1 L50 P4 PLATS, W C R 21/738 38.60 X 100

cc: K. Bridges, DEGC  
N. Marsh, DEGC  
V. Farley, HRD





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**Coleman A. Young Municipal Center**  
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**Detroit, MI 48226**

**RE: Request for the Establishment of a Con**  
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 Development District for the property located at  
**48224** and described on Attachment A.

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 restoration project according to MCL 207.654.  
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 operating in early 2021. The restaurant's special  
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 second Baobab Fare location. The restoration involves  
 demolition of existing interior elements, the replacement  
 new interior finishes and doors/windows, the installation  
 equipment, the installation of new furnishings  
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 As the feasibility of the project currently stands  
 an exemption. The estimated future property tax  
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The current number of full-time employees is 2