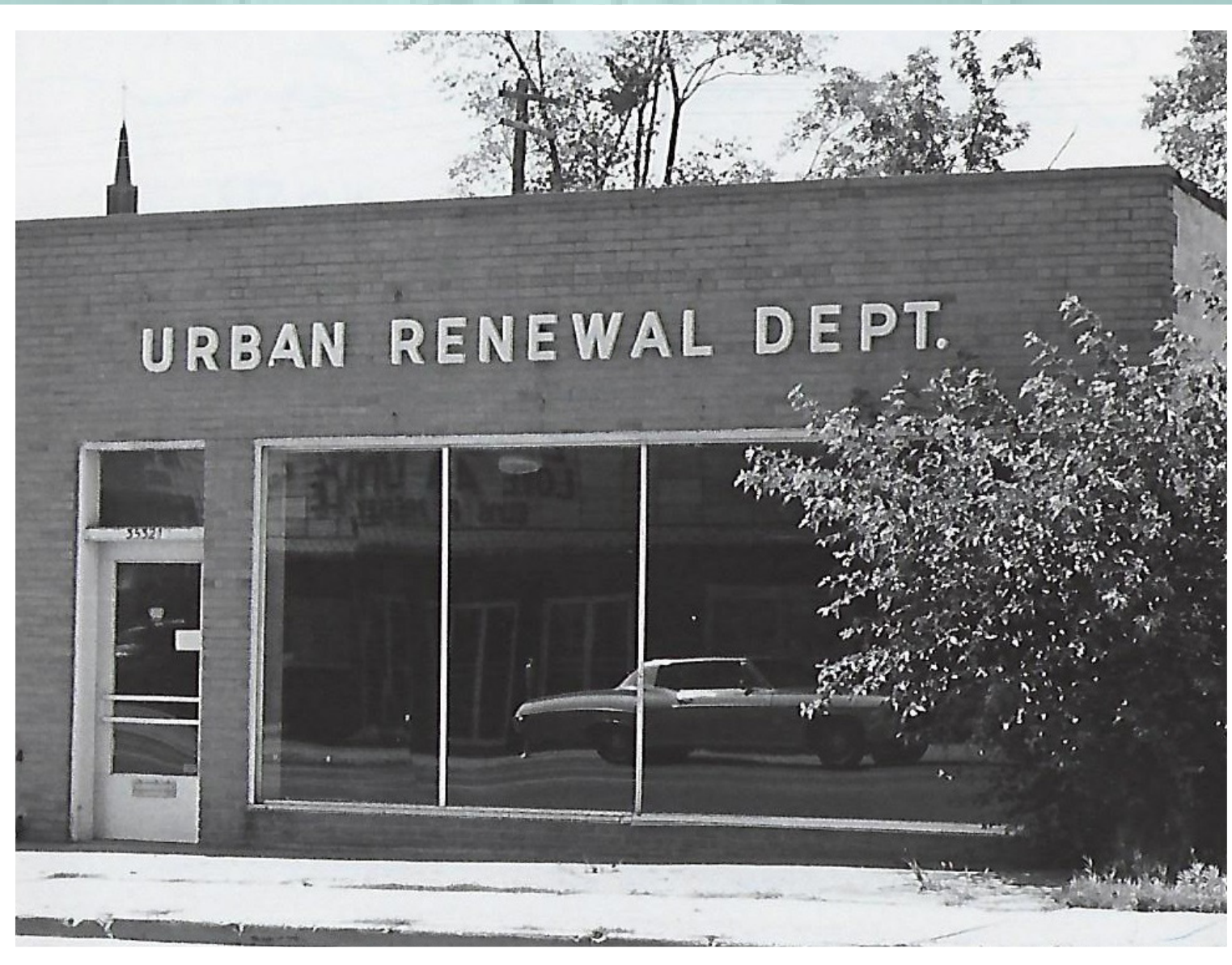


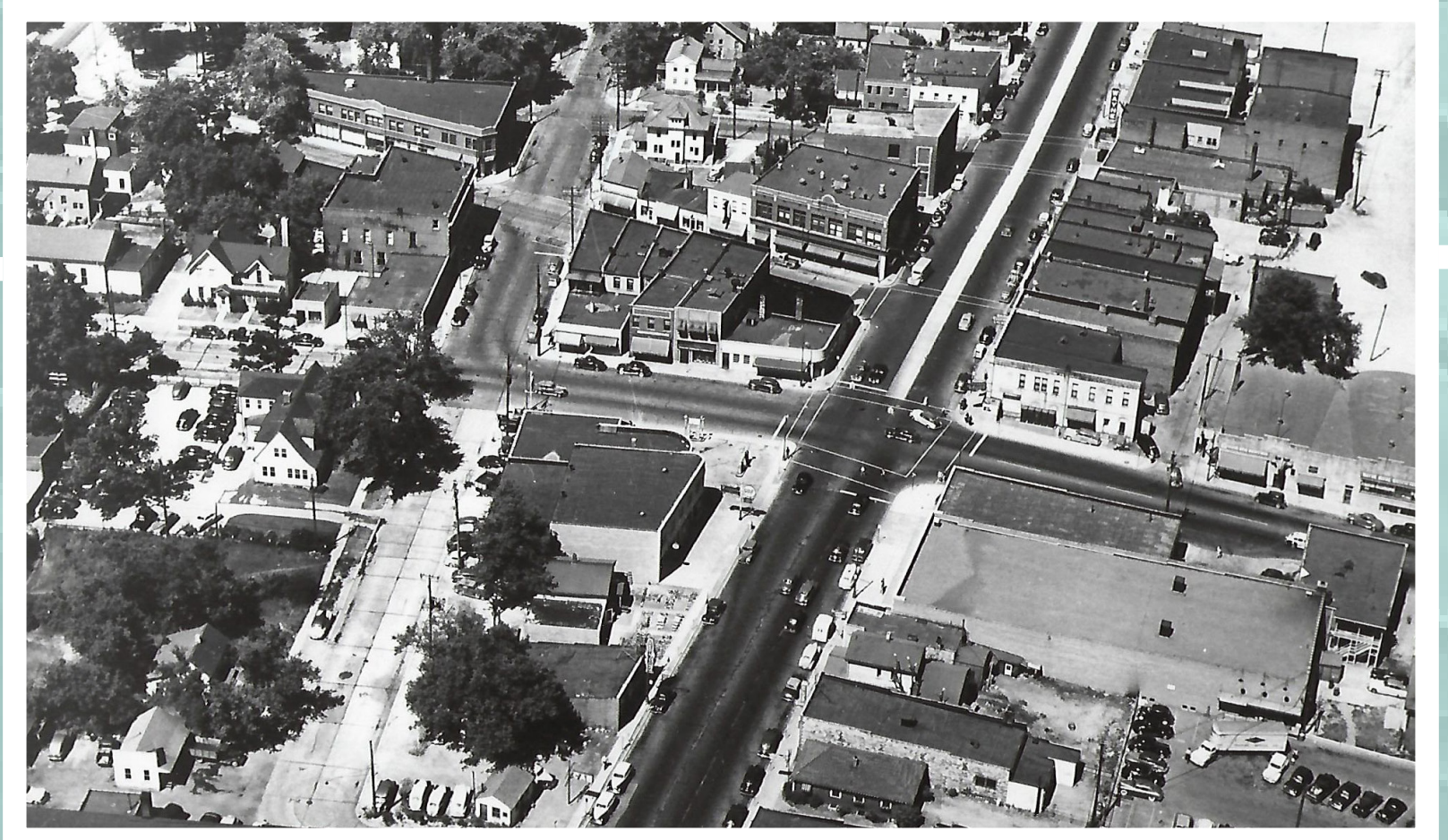
Urban Renewal



Urban Renewal in Wayne was done in three phases. The first two phases concentrated on housing and neighborhood improvement, while the final and most controversial phase involved rebuilding downtown Wayne.



The first two parts began in 1959 when federal dollars were allocated to bring the area south of the railroad tracks up to code. Hundreds of homes were demolished and replaced with identical tract houses. The area also got parks, sidewalks, schools and improved city services.



The third phase, downtown redevelopment, began in 1962. There was a need to re-route Wayne road and Michigan Avenue due to increased traffic and a poor road layout. It was decided to combine this project with federal money to revitalize downtown properties and rebuild the downtown.



Beginning in 1964, 77 acres of homes, businesses and buildings were levelled in central Wayne.



There was never a definitive plan for what would be built on all the cleared Urban Renewal land. Proposals would come and go, all the while a group of Wayne merchants and business owners were actively seeking to keep out new businesses and competition.



The eastern tip of the new island between Michigan Avenues was the first area to be rebuilt with new businesses. At the other end, a small mall called "Metro Place" opened in 1971.



Urban Renewal was officially over in 1973, and central Wayne was largely a grassy lot. It would take nearly 30 years for the area to fill in with new buildings and businesses.