

MAJORITY BLACK DETROIT 2020 NEW DECADE - NEW DEMANDS

DETROIT People's

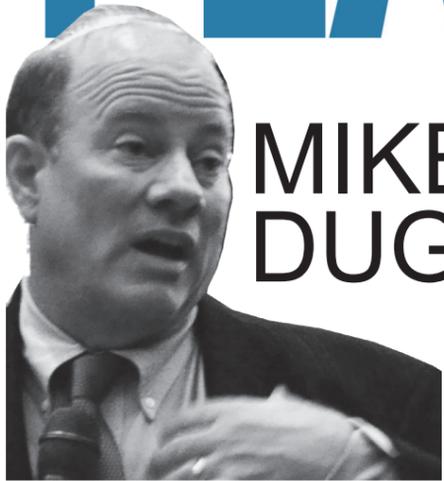
"...we must face the hard fact that many Americans would like to have a nation which is a democracy for white Americans but simultaneously a dictatorship over black Americans."

~Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
from America's Chief Moral Dilemma

 @DetroitPeoples

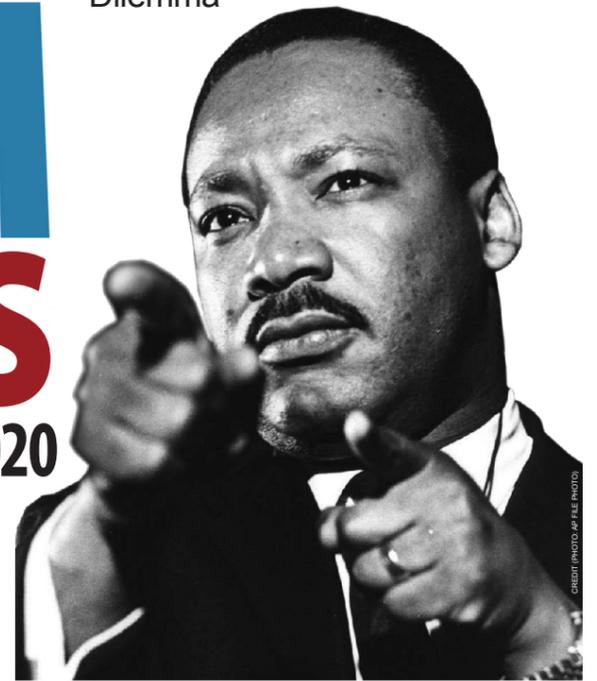
 PeoplesPlatform

PLATFORM NEWS



MIKE DUGGAN: BAD NEGOTIATOR

Vol. 17 - MLK Day 2020



Mayor Duggan has repeatedly implied that Detroiters would be unable to negotiate on their own behalf but the Mayor and his administration have repeatedly negotiated bad deals. The Fiat Chrysler Community Benefits Agreement is the most recent and most offensive deal to date.

- **Not Enough Reinvestment in Community** - Only 8.8 Million coming from FCA

- **Not Enough Transparency** - Details needed to negotiate outcomes that reflect community concerns and input were withheld.

- **Bad Deals on Land Swaps** - Without community input players who have historically hurt community benefited from this deal. Crown Enterprise (the Maroun Family), Michael Kelly, Hantz Farms and DTE among others.

- **30 year Tax Capture** - After completion of the project FCA will pay themselves back for the cost of redeveloping the site by pocketing \$93 Million from their employees' paychecks over 30 years. \$34 Million of that would have gone to school funding.

- **Environmental Racism** - Risking residents already challenged health with increased pollution while it is reduced in Warren.

- **Beniteau Residents Deserve More!** - Detroiters closest to the FCA expansion have not been given enough to cover their home repair or cover the cost of filters to protect their health.

2020 - DECADE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD! DEVELOPMENT THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The end of the recent decade found Michigan ranked as one of the top five states in terms of corporate subsidies. Most of those subsidies landed in Detroit in the hands of wealthy white developers in support of a poorly conceived Detroit redevelopment strategy – a strategy that has resulted in hyper development of the downtown/midtown entertainment and sports complex. (Continued Pg. 2)

Media: New Billboards!

Detroit People's Platform and Equitable Detroit Coalition's two billboards in the FCA impact area gave voice to the economic and environmental racism of the deal.



Residents from Beniteau and the "Impact Area" join a press conference on Air Quality around Fiat Chrysler's new assembly line and paint plant with US Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, State Senator Stephanie Chang and environmental justice advocates.



Bus Riders Check The 2020 Transit Update inside!



facebook.com/groups/transittalks

(Continued from Cover)

2020 - DECADE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

At the same time, neighborhood residents have watched from afar as they experience inhumane water shutoffs, unjust housing foreclosures, skyrocketing rent increases and job growth that mostly benefits suburbanites and tech newcomers who land the downtown jobs. **The irony is that this dismal contrast of economic development exist at the same time Detroiters are national leaders in putting forth progressive public policies to balance tax giveaways.**

In 2016 Detroiters led the nation in organizing a grassroots movement to create a Community Benefits Agreement Ordinance. The CBO as it is referred to was created to give residents negotiating power to win social, economic and environmental benefits from private developers in exchange for foregoing the associated tax revenues generated by these large scale private developments subsidized by taxpayers. Corporate and special interest organized to defeat Proposal A, resulting in a more

sanitized and austere version of a CBA ordinance drafted by city council (Referred to as Prop B) that gives far too much power to the politicians and corporate benefactors in the CBA process.

During the past three years Detroit People's Platform (DPP) has allied with Equitable Detroit Coalition (EDC) to continue to organize and advocate for a stronger, more just and equitable CBA ordinance. DPP and EDC have monitored the recent large scale development CBO projects and concluded that the present ordinance violates both the spirit and intent of a genuine community benefits ordinance. Detroiters deserve better!

In 2017 DPP and EDC began monitoring the community benefit agreement process under the newly formed CBO. Based on our research and assessments in 2018, DPP and EDC published a report calling for a series of amendments to the current ordinance. Coalition members met with city officials to raise concerns and to offer recommendation for ways to improve the existing CBO.

In summer 2019, city council convened an internal workgroup to review the current CBA ordinance along with EDC and DPP's propose amendments.

In late January 2020, city council will host a public meeting to share the list of proposed amendments and feedback gathered from the public at large. This will be an opportunity for those who did not participate in the previous survey to weigh in.

We invite Detroiters to organize with us and demand change.

Visit the City of Detroit website to take a look at the complete list of proposed amendments. DPP and EDC welcome your comments. This next decade must be the Decade of the Neighborhood and self determination. That work begins with a strong and robust redevelopment agenda that puts power and decision making into the hands of every day residents.

Community Benefits Conference 3.0 - In September of 2019 Equitable Detroit Coalition co-hosted this well attended and received gathering. Thank you to all of the presenters and volunteers that made this event possible and powerful!



Watch and Share Dr. Perry's keynote from the Community Benefits 3.0 Conference.

There's nothing wrong with BLACK PEOPLE that ENDING RACISM cannot solve.

@andreperriedu



A REAL Community Benefits Ordinance, the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and low-income bus fare are tools toward ENDING RACISM. Join Detroit People's Platform **PEOPLE'S PLATFORM**

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MUST HAVE AMENDMENTS!



1. The result of the CBO process must be a legally binding contractual agreement between the NAC and the Developer.
2. Lower the threshold for CBO projects. Right now the current CBA process is triggered when projects are \$75 million and \$1 million in public investment. The current threshold allows a number of publicly funded projects to go unnoticed and therefore bypassing the CBO process.
3. Replace the current Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) structure. The Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) is a narrow membership of 9 members with only two (2) representatives elected by community and the rest as political appointees. With a broad and more diverse membership of impacted residents and stakeholder, the community benefit process is likely to be more responsive to community needs.
4. More transparency in the CBA process. Currently members of the NAC are not required to reveal potential conflicts of interest or conflicts of effort in order to serve. Recent NACs have included board members of DEGC, active city employees and individuals with close ties to the project developer. These power relationships tend to crowd out the voice of everyday residents.
5. No tax abatements without community approval of benefits plan. City Council approves tax abatements until the NAC structure has signed off on the CBA agreement.
6. Developers are mandated to complete relevant assessments detailing project health, social and environmental impacts on residents in the project impact area and nearby neighborhoods as part of the CBA process.

TRANSIT JUSTICE: WHAT'S AHEAD IN 2020

The closing years of the last decade witnessed increased attention to the vital role public transit plays in the economic growth of any city and region. Detroit is no exception. What makes Detroit stand out from its sister cities across the nation is the once proud mantle that Detroit held as the Motor City. The increase in the cost of personal car purchase and auto insurance and the preferences of a younger demographic for public transit and alternative mobility options has resulted in much needed attention and increased tensions for essential transit riders, those who depend on public transit as their primary means of transportation.

In the past decade, it is clear that bus riders in the city of Detroit experienced divestment and the increased gentrification of public transit. Policies rooted in anti-black racism and neighborhood segregation were dominant. Further, the transfer of public resources to private transit and mobility projects such as the QLine and establishment of particular routes that facilitate suburban ridership to downtown job sites, have resulted in transit injustice. What has gone missing from transit planning is much needed investment in neighborhood routes that increase reliable on-time service, and much-needed infrastructure like bus shelters and seats.

In 2012, Detroit People's Platform started organizing with riders on bus routes, transit centers, and community based social service sites. The transit justice team emerged from these activities. Over the years these essential riders have stepped up participation in public hearings and meetings thereby increasing the voice and power of bus riders and Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) accountability. This organizing effort has resulted in centering the needs of essential riders in the ongoing debates around transit, including transits role in displacement.

The transit justice team and DPP have organized to prioritize the needs of essential riders emphasized with the following WINS:

- In 2017 The Keep Woodward on Woodward Campaign successfully restored downtown Woodward #53 bus service after several years of detours and Q Line disruption of this key bus route connecting hundreds of Detroiters to downtown jobs and services.
- In 2019, the transit justice team and DPP launched a Fare Justice Campaign and organized and won reduced youth bus fare from 75 cents to 50 cents along with free bus service for students with a student ID or wearing a school t-shirt with logo.
- Through ongoing advocacy, DDOT also eliminated the application fee for the reduced fare ID card.
- With public pressure from riders, DDOT restored the monthly Community Input Meetings held every third Thursday of the month.
- Calling for greater transparency, the transit justice team and DPP won the passage of the DDOT Public Notification Ordinance which mandates public reporting of bus service performance and incidents.
- The Fare Justice Campaign in addition to seeking reduction in the cost of youth/student fares is also a part of a broader Fare Equity Ordinance included in Council President Pro Temp Mary Sheffield's Peoples Bills. This ordinance will be introduced to the full city council in late January 2020 and will call for the elimination of bus fares for certain low- or no-income bus riders, including veterans, returning citizens and those who are homeless.

Join the Transit Justice Team!
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OPPORTUNITIES TO ORGANIZE FOR TRANSIT JUSTICE



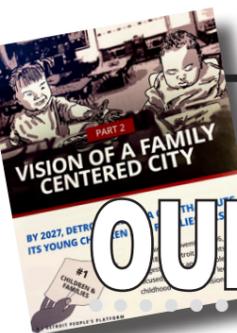
Detroit People's Platform and the Transit Justice Team will continue organizing with low-income workers, students, families, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and returning citizens to achieve transit justice. In addition to the Fare Justice Campaign, our organizing efforts will expand to promote equity not only in the traditional transit services but also in the emerging and mobility services and platforms driven by technological innovation.

This year we will possibly vote on a new **REGIONAL MASTER TRANSIT PLAN** that will include the City of Detroit, Wayne, Washtenaw, and Oakland counties with the ability for other municipalities to join. House Bill 5229 introduced last November revises the Michigan Municipalities Partnership Act allowing any city, county, department, authorities and other municipalities join in regional partnership agreement to provide public services locally and regionally with increased funding. The bill is currently being debated in the House of Representatives and it has bipartisan support.

This advocacy begins with essential riders drafting a multi-year transportation plan for the City of Detroit that will center policies and services in public transit and mobility services that are rooted in racial equity.

The US 2020 Census will provide the opportunity for Detroit residents to be fully counted to ensure that the city will receive appropriate funding for critical public services. The US Census will also provide critical data to help organizers like the transit justice team and DPP promote policies that respond to the demographic reality i.e. DDOT has a 87% black ridership (American Community Survey, 2018).

Equitable and reliable public transportation is necessary for thriving neighborhoods that support the mobility needs of individuals and families regardless of race and class. Bus riders in Detroit are entitled to convenient, comfortable, and reliable public transportation that facilitates movement across Detroit and the region. The organizing work of DPP and the transit justice team is to ensure this commitment is enshrined in public policies that honor the legacy of transit justice in the past and future movements for civil and human rights.



OUR VOICE MATTERS 2020

In November 2019, Detroit People's Platform published **Our Voice Matters**. The toolkit is designed to educate and provide organizing tools for parents and caregivers of young children and is a companion guide to the Hope Starts Here (HSH) collaborative that is focused on creating a visionary early childhood education system for Detroit children. DPP will work with our family engagement members to organize a series of trainings for parents, caregivers, and key stakeholders who want to be effective advocates for children.

The training will focus on how organizing and advocacy can be powerful in creating an early childhood education landscape that centers racial equity, cultural learning and appreciation, and healthy physical and emotional outcomes for young children. In addition DPP will broaden the organizing and advocacy to include a racial equity lens.

**Detroit People's Platform
Family Engagement**
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Detroit People's Platform believes that a quality early childhood education that centers family includes the following:

- Access to clean, usable running water in home.
- Access to healthy food.
- Housing security that means affordable and quality housing through ownership or renting.
- Access to quality public transportation.
- Economic security through family supporting wages, paid sick time, or entrepreneurship.

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SAVE THE DATE and
MAKE A PLAN TO

VOTE

**Presidential Primary
Tuesday, March 10
Primary Election
Tuesday, August 4
General Election
Tuesday, November 3**

1. Know your district
2. Attend candidate forums
3. Demand accountability from elected officials

DETROITERS END THE DECADE STRONG!



A Surge in Civic Engagement

- In November, hundreds of Detroiters filled the 13th floor of CAYMC to make comment on Mayor Duggan's "Blight Bond". City Council voted down the bond. Members Ayers, Benson and Leland voted for it, while President Jones, Pro-Temp Sheffield and members Castaneda-Lopez, McCallister, Spivey, and Tate voted it down.

Thank you to all Detroit People's Platform members and supporters who took action to stop this mortgage on Detroiters future.

2019 saw an increase in activism around issues that impact Detroiters. From continued engagement for water affordability and against illegal home foreclosures to arrests and altercations at the Charter Revision Commission and Police Board of Commissioner meetings, many Detroiters are stepping up to respond to the failures of our elected officials and the damaging policies they support.



The opportunity zone program needs protections in place to prevent unintended negative consequences of massive and rapid investment in low income areas.

In 2020 Detroit People's Platform will join with national advocates in calling for the modification of the current Opportunity Zone program.

OPPORTUNITY ZONES WHO BENEFITS?

Opportunity Zones were created by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. The program provides incentives to motivate wealthy investors to put their money in distressed areas. The law grants lucrative tax breaks to encourage new investment in poor areas around the country. Opportunity Zones are intended to provide tax breaks to incentivize in "distressed communities." These areas have been identified in census tracts designated by the U.S. Treasury Department. However, the ones in Detroit are some of the wealthiest in the city.

Some of the initial Opportunity Zone deals have been luxury apartment towers in the downtown areas of cities. Equitable development experts warn that current fund proposals and the developments that have been completed in opportunity zones show negative results, the fund is waiving taxes for investments that would have been made with or without the program. Consequently, luxury development is simply being made more profitable by the opportunity zone designation.

Detroit People's Platform Senior Planning and Housing staffer Amina Kirk suggest; *"utilizing opportunity investments to fund equitable development and affordable housing initiatives that are currently underfunded in the city. Funding these initiatives would ensure that distressed communities and low-income residents benefit when funds are established related to their neighborhoods. Funding opportunities for distressed communities could include safeguards for low income residents and businesses such as a property tax freezes or rent subsidies to cover rent increases."*

However, opportunity zones will likely function as a giveaway to the wealthy in Michigan, without bringing prosperity to the distressed areas that will generate these tax breaks. The program currently has no process to measure success. There are no data gathering plans in place to gauge how much new investment has come into the opportunity zones due to the tax breaks, or how many jobs the investments create. One very serious concern is that opportunity zones might fund mostly luxury developments, which will increase property values in distressed communities. This rise in rents and property taxes could lead to massive displacement of low income residents and small businesses. This concern is supported by the fact that similar area-specific investment policies attempted in the past, such as Enterprise Zones, caused residents in investment areas to be displaced.

In Michigan, two of the largest corporate entities in the city of Detroit, Bedrock, Inc. and Quicken Loans, Inc. have been accused of coordinating directly with White House officials to arrange a revision to the census tracts that were eligible for opportunity zone designations in Detroit. The revision allowed the real estate holdings of Quicken Loans founder Dan Gilbert to be included in the opportunity zone program, despite their location in one of the wealthiest areas in Detroit. These current examples of the program in practice supports concerns that while opportunity zones may fail to incentivize development in distressed areas, they will be certain to succeed in their parallel goal of significantly increasing earnings for investors.

"Opportunity fund investors could also choose to assist in financing the creation of quality affordable housing in the same locations that luxury developments are being built. This could be accomplished by requiring fund contributors or fund managers to donate to affordable housing programs such as affordable housing trust funds and community land trusts in opportunity zones. Opportunity Zone Fund managers could also choose to engage in a community benefits agreement process in which the community would decide how a portion of fund money would be spent in their neighborhood."

Opportunity zones could function in a manner that avoid the creation of these threats of displacement.

Cited - Read More - The Problem With Opportunity Zones, CityLab, 8/28/19; Tax law's 'opportunity zones' won't create opportunities for the people who need it most, Timothy Weaver, The Conversation, David Neumark & Helen Simpson, 2015. "Do place-based policies matter?," FRBSF Economic Letter, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. Jeff Ernsthansen and Justin Elliott, How a Tax Break to Help the Poor Went to NBA Owner Dan Gilbert, ProPublica, Oct. 24, 2019

