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People's
PLATFORM

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Register Today!

2018
Summit

Saturday, September 8th

9 a.m. - Noon

(full day ends 4:30pm)

FREE - Lunch Included

SEIU, Local 1

2211 E. Jefferson

MORE DETAILS

PG. 4

PLATFORM **NEWS**



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PeoplesPlatform

Vol. 13 - Summer 2018

IT'S BACK! CHARTER REVISION IS ON THE BALLOT. AGAIN?

On Tuesday, August 7 2018 there will be one proposal on the primary ballot. Proposal R asks Detroiters if they favor a "general revision" of the City Charter. The City Charter is an important document and there is a great deal of information to consider before voting on Proposal R. If R passes, voters will select candidates for the Charter Revision Commission in November, and have an opportunity to engage in the Charter Revision process.

What is Proposal R?

- Proposal R is on the Detroit Primary Election Ballot this year. The Primary Election is Tuesday, August 7th, 2018.
- Proposal R asks Detroiters: "Do you favor a general revision of the 2012 Detroit City Charter by a charter revision commission? Yes or No"

What is the City Charter?

- The City Charter can be likened to the US and Michigan Constitutions. It is the law that mandates how the City works on a day to day basis.
- The 2012 City Charter facilitated the shift from an "at large" City Council to the current Council By District system.
- The 2012 City Charter also provides for a level of community power and oversight.
- The Police Commission and it's District-based structure being one important example of community oversight.

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DETROIT-STYLE CIVILITY

"Civil discussions with people who themselves may have already breached the bounds of civility are difficult."⁽¹⁾

- Vann R. Newkirk II

This started out as a response to the Detroit Regional Chamber's tone-deaf call to "Create a Culture of Civility" earlier in the year. Since that time, calls for civility have been issued from the national stage. Those in power and those in denial have called for civility in answer to righteous outrage over the upsurge of white policing of black living, of court decisions that uphold racist immigration policy and legitimize bigotry, and over kids in cages. These offensive and strategic calls for civility resonate with Detroiters because they have heard them repeatedly since Emergency Management and for decades prior. ~ ed.

Last year, we recognized the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Detroit Rebellion and many in the city dove deep into discussions of its meaning and impact. This year, we continue to recognize 50th anniversaries associated with the civil rights movement, most recently Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's assassination and the passage of the Fair Housing Act. Here at Detroit People's Platform our attention also shifts to the fact that 2018 marks the 5th anniversary of Emergency Management and Bankruptcy in Detroit.

⁽¹⁾ www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/12/discussing-racism-white-voters/509528/

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MAJORITY-BLACK DETROIT MATTERS

by Shea Howell Boggs Center Living for Change Newsletter
June 11th, 2018 - boggscenter.org

There is a new sign about town sparking a lot of controversy. In bold white letters on a black background it proclaims "Majority-Black Detroit Matters." For some this simple statement captures the growing concern that we are not only becoming two Detroits, but increasingly a Detroit dominated by and for white elites.

Much of the power structure dismisses these concerns about the white invasion of our city as paranoia. The current administration and their corporate supporters proclaim the increasingly whiter, wealthier population growth as the only path for development. A large part of the Detroit "Come Back" is the coming back into the city of people of white suburbanites.

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CHARTER REVISION (from pg 1)

Why is the City Charter up for a vote now?

- A previous version of the City Charter mandates that a question about charter revision is placed on the ballot and voted on every 16 years.
- This is the case for Proposal R; it is on the ballot to meet legal requirements.
- The last time the Charter was opened it was through an independent ballot initiative regarding proposed changes to the structure of city council i.e. shift to Council by District.
- The current City Charter became the official charter for the city of Detroit in January 2012.

What about the Candidates for City Charter Revision Commission?

- If Proposal R passes, individuals who were successful in having their petition signatures certified by the city Clerk's office, will then become candidates for the City Charter Revision Commission.
- They will appear as candidates on the ballot in the November 2018 General Election
- As in any other election, the candidates will campaign for their seat on the revision commission and it will be up to the voters to cast their votes for the candidate of their choice. **The Detroit People's Platform does not endorse candidates**
- The top nine (9) vote getters will serve as members of the nine (9) member Charter Revision Commission.
- There is a process for write-in candidates as well. The deadline for write-in candidates to file Declaration of Intent forms is 4:00 p.m. on July 27th.
- The 9 candidates elected in November will be seated on the City Charter Revision Commission for three years.

What is the charter revision process?

- The last charter revision process took three years and spent nearly a million dollars.⁽¹⁾
- Though the process includes public hearings and other opportunities for community engagement, the Commissioners themselves have a great deal of influence in determining what the revision process and final charter document will look like.
- After the revision process, the Commission's proposed Charter goes to the State's Attorney General who has the power to change and edit it before approval by the Governor. The Detroiters must vote on it.

Are there alternatives to revision?

- There are other, less time consuming and expensive alternatives that allow for changes to be made to the city charter without opening it up for the full scale revision process.
- The charter can be amended by a 3/5 majority vote of City Council or a ballot initiative that would put the amendment to a vote by Detroiters.

What's good about the current City Charter?

- The roll out of the 2012 City Charter was interrupted by Emergency Management and the Municipal Bankruptcy process.
- Since the end of Emergency Management, the City Council and Mayor's office have not fully implemented, or fully adhered to, the City Charter.
- Citizens should be given an opportunity to both learn about and use the current charter.
- The current city charter approved in 2012, includes strong citizen and community engagement aspects that could be of great benefit to the community.

Reference Links

- 2012 City Charter Revision Page:
<http://www.detcharter.com/charter/>
- Michigan Radio 2012 Charter Revision timeline
<http://michiganradio.org/post/detroit-voters-approve-new-city-charter>
- ⁽¹⁾ Charter Revision Budget:
<http://www.crainsdetroit.com/article/20100427/EMAIL01/304279999/charter-panel-makes-hires-gets-down-to-business>
- Michigan Municipal League
mml.org/pdf/charter_revision/city1.pdf



TRANSIT

On June 29th, 2018 - the Detroit People's Platform - Transit Justice Team joined our bus drivers' union, the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local #26 at the Hart Plaza labor monument to support H.R. 6016 - "Bus Operator and Pedestrian Protection Act." This bill will provide transit departments funding to retrofit buses to include safer workstations for bus operators, improved seating for drivers to prevent back-injuries, and to protect pedestrians from bus accidents by eliminating a blind spot on the driver side. The bill also mandates annual safety plans that incorporate safer designs, training for de-escalation of conflicts on the bus, and prevention of pedestrian accidents.

The ATU is asking all bus riders and residents in Detroit to call their Congressional Representative, Senator Debbie Stabenow and Senator Gary Peters, in addition to their state senators and representatives to support H.R. 6016.

The Transit Justice Team recognizes the need for safer coaches that will protect both bus riders crossing the street and drivers who risk assault. This issue is very sensitive because we advocate for the needs of essential bus riders - yet, we always emphasize against narratives that divide bus riders and drivers. Our support at this rally recognizes the fact that if our bus drivers aren't safe, neither are bus riders.

**Reach your elected officials:
Congressional Switchboard
(202) 224-3121.**



HOUSING



Allied Media Conference 2018 Housing Justice

Detroit People's Platform cohosted the Housing Justice Network Gathering at this year's Allied Media Conference. Thanks to our facilitators and cohosts for moving the discussion about Housing Justice forward.

Illegal Foreclosure Coalition:

"Detroit homeowners with incomes below or near the federal poverty line will be able to avoid tax foreclosure and stay in their homes for a cost of \$1,000, under terms of a legal settlement approved today by the Detroit City Council. The agreement also makes it less burdensome for residents to apply for a city program exempting low-income homeowners from taxes they cannot afford. The city will continue its "Homeowner Right-of-Refusal Program" to enable poverty exemption-eligible homeowners to save their homes from foreclosure for \$1000 for the next three tax years: 2018, 2019 and 2020."
<http://www.aclumich.org/article/aclu-naacp-legal-defense-fund-settle-tax-foreclosure-case-enabling-low-income-detroiters>

Changes in the Rental Registration Ordinance.

Changes have been made to the highly contested Rental Regulation Ordinance. There was a great deal advocacy around getting this burdensome and punitive legislation amended. In addition to other changes tenants are no longer forced to place rent in escrow and pay an administrative fee, but to reflect state law that makes escrow optional. With amendment, now if the tenant decides to withhold rent the landlord is given an additional 90 days to become compliant. Detroit People's Platform supports tenant rights and also recognizes that rentals for low-income residents are threatened by policies that promote displacement and loss of black property ownership.

Housing Trust Fund

Last year the Housing Trust Fund Coalition worked with Councilmember Mary Sheffield to pass an Affordable Housing Ordinance. This ordinance created the Housing Trust Fund and provided a small revenue stream with 20% of Commercial Real Estate Sales dedicated to the fund.

The People's Platform NEWS is published to support the ongoing work of the organizations and residents committed to the **People's Platform.**
detroitpeoplesplatform.org

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(from pg 1)

“Majority-Black Detroit Matters” interrupts this thinking. It forces us to ask what kind of development matters? At whose expense? For whose benefit? For what reasons?

Such questioning about the direction of our city is essential. Detroit has the opportunity to demonstrate to ourselves and the country that it is possible to create entirely new ways of living in urban areas.

Signs of this new kind of urban life are everywhere in the neighborhoods. Urban gardens flourish to feed neighbors, elders open garages to share skills and develop art with children, storytellers find bicycles to roam neighborhoods and evoke memory and enduring values. Creativity and critical thinking abound.

With this new energy comes a resurgence of African American political power. And that is what the corporate power structure finds so threatening in the statement Majority-Black Detroit Matters.

In the spring of 1966 James Boggs published, “The City is the Black Man’s Land” in Monthly Review. He wrote about the shift of 50 large cities to majority black populations. Boggs said these changes mean a new form of Black power. He wrote:

“In accordance with the general philosophy of majority rule and the specific American tradition of ethnic groupings (Irish, Polish, Italian) migrating en masse to the big cities and then taking over the leadership of municipal government, black Americans are next in line. Each previous ethnic grouping achieved first-class citizenship chiefly because its leaders became the cities’ leaders, but racism is so deeply imbedded in the American psyche from top to bottom, and from Right to Left, that it cannot even entertain the idea of black political power in the cities. The white power structure, which includes organized labor, resorts to every conceivable strategy to keep itself in power and the black man out.”

Over the next 40 years that white power structure struggled to reassert its political power in the urban centers of this land. By 2010 only 19 cities had majority black populations, and most of them are experiencing intense efforts at redevelopment. Detroit is the number one majority city, followed by Jackson, Mississippi.

The loss of African American political power in urban areas is no accident. The policies and processes to reassert white political power have been well documented.

We welcome Majority-Black Detroit Matters. It is a step in opening a critical conversation for all of us.

LET’S COUNT SOME OF THE WAYS GOVERNMENT & CORPORATE LEADERSHIP HAVE TARGETED DETROITERS:

1. Public School Takeover by the State of Michigan
2. Consent Agreement/Emergency Management
3. Municipal Bankruptcy
4. Hijacking of Worker Pension and Healthcare
5. Privatization of Services like Lights and Trash Removal
6. Loss of governance of the Water System
7. Taking public funds and using them for private projects like the Qline and LCA (Little Caesars Arena)
8. Creating legislation and a well funded campaign to defeat a community-led CBA ballot initiative
9. Refusal to stop Water Shutoffs that harm Detroit children and senior citizens.
10. Calling housing “affordable” when it isn’t affordable to the majority of Detroiters.
11. Using hardest hit funds intended to keep Detroiters in their homes to demolish homes.
12. Threatening and inappropriate physical handling of citizens in meetings by city appointees, staff and designees.
13. Huge transfers of public funds and resources to wealthy white billionaires.

hosted it’s 2018 Detroit Policy Conference. This year’s focus was on “Creating a Culture of Civility.” The conference referenced the widely heralded example of the relationship between Mayor Duggan and members of City Council. In the Mayor’s recent State of the City he touted the difference in their relationship between now and the past. Perhaps he, and the Chamber fail to recognize the historically oppositional stance by some Council Members in the past was due to their protection and defense of their constituents. Some council members could be counted on to challenge the administration. While a new age of civility at CAYMC bodes well for the administration and corporate interests, it does NOT for everyday Detroiters.

It is an insult that in an 80+% majority-black city, both corporate and government representatives feel completely comfortable disrespecting community members. When leaders and their representatives are allowed to roll their eyes, make racist and condescending comments and negate the ability of Detroiters to engage in serious and thoughtful discussions they are replicating tactics used to silence opposition. The levels disrespect shown when Detroiters speak out or show up and protest peacefully against injustices creates a culture of **incivility** across all of our institutions.

Don’t lecture Detroiters on Civility. The solution is to actually listen to Detroiters and meet us where we are, whether we fit into the plans or not.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Equitable Detroit Coalition delegations have been meeting with City Councilmembers to share their concerns about the failures of the standing Community Benefit Ordinance.

In May the city of Detroit’s Legislative Policy Division released their “Quicken Loans/Bedrock Subsidiary Public Subsidies Report”. This report finally puts a total dollar amount on the tax abatements and capture our public officials have given away to Dan Gilbert’s companies, all without a real Community Benefits Agreement - The report is available on our website - detroitpeoplesplatform.org

Equitable Detroit Coalition has continued our statewide with groups like **Rising for Economic Democracy in Ypsi, REDY**, and others. EDC has also supported **Equitable St. Louis** and others across the country. The work in Detroit is helping to grow a national movement in equitable development and community benefits.

CIVILITY (from pg 1)

These anniversaries also remind us that transformational changes were not easily won and certainly not won by being polite or civil. These anniversaries are also important and vital to Detroiters as they represent touchstones of our history that denote the emergence of Black political, economic and cultural power in the largest majority-black city in the US. The changes that came from movement work in our city and across the country were in part sparked by the interruption of civility, most famously and powerfully, through nonviolent direct action.

Nationally, there has been a renewed interest in improving civil discourse due to the Trump presidency and the complete breakdown of bipartisanship in our political and civic life. However, we must not confuse the legitimate push back against the President’s divisive rhetoric with the growing chorus of Detroiters demanding our equity stake in the city’s current revitalization.

In March, the Detroit Regional Chamber

The high cost of funding Dan’s Dreams on our dime:

Tax Abatements
\$126,946,717

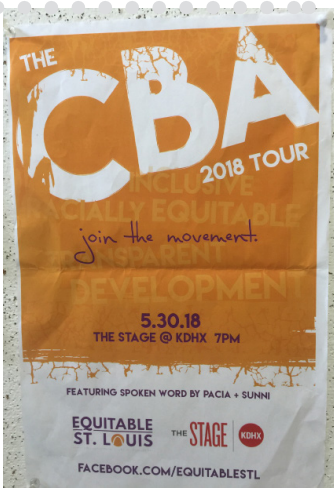

Tax Capture
\$639,812,344

What do we get in return?

What’s our ROI?
(Return on Investment)

Where’s our Community Benefits Agreement?

DETROIT People’s PLATFORM Read the city’s report on our page.



2018 VOTE

Detroiters and people throughout Michigan are being hurt by decisions made, or not made, in Lansing and Washington. This year provides an opportunity to influence our representation. These are some of the items that *may* appear on your November ballot. (source: ballotpedia.org)

U.S. Congress - Michigan Voters will elect one member to the U.S. Senate. Detroiters from State Congressional Districts 13 and 14 will elect candidates to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

State Executive - The following state executive offices are up for election in Michigan in 2018: Governor, Lieutenant governor, Attorney general, Secretary of state, State board of education, and State board of regents.

State Judicial - Two seats on the Michigan Supreme Court and in District 1 of the Michigan Court of Appeals will be on the ballot for Detroiters. Detroiters will also vote District Court Judges.

State Legislative - Detroiters in State Senate Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 will elect representatives to the Michigan State Senate. Detroiters in State House Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 will elect representatives to the Michigan House of Representatives.

Detroit School Board - Two seats on the Detroit Public Schools Community District Board of Education will be on your ballot.

Wayne County - Wayne County Executive and County Commission will be on the ballot. There are 15 Districts in Wayne County. Circuit Court Judges will also appear.

State Ballot Proposals - *At the time of printing these ballot issues are yet to be approved to appear on the ballot. Keep up to date on these issues so that you are informed.*

Redistricting - If on the ballot would create an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission in charge of redistricting, ensuring that voters will choose their politicians, not the other way around.

One Fair Wage - One Fair Wage of Michigan is proposing gradually increasing the minimum wage to \$12 by 2022, and for workers who receive tips, the minimum wage would get to \$12 per hour by 2024.

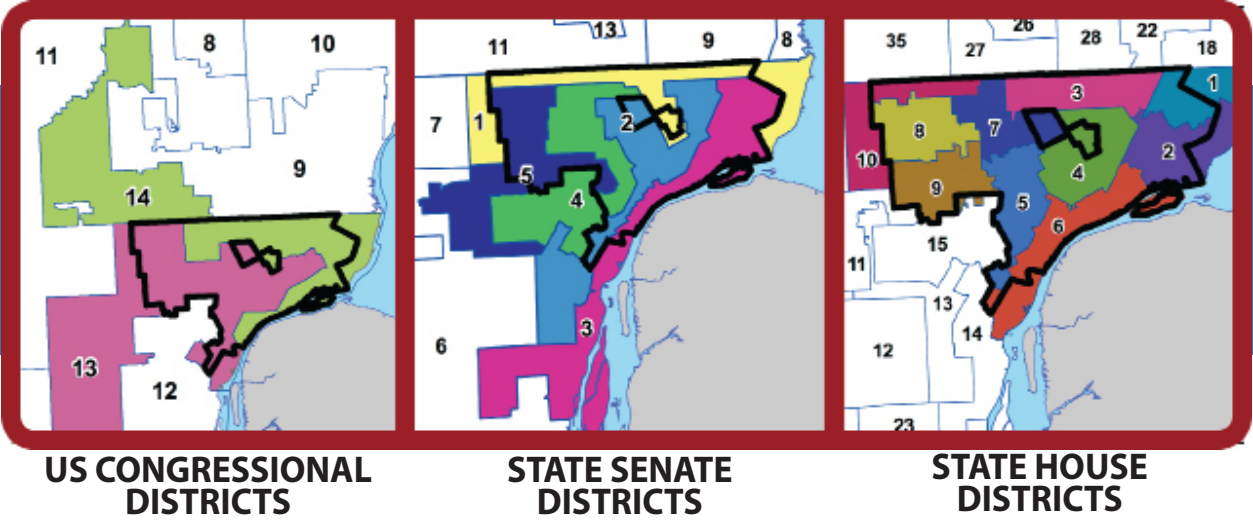
Earned Paid Sick Leave - Earned Paid Sick Leave will ensure that all Michigan workers have the ability to earn paid sick days to use when they are ill or need to take care of a family member.

PRIMARY ELECTION

Tuesday Aug. 7th

GENERAL ELECTION

Tuesday Nov. 6th



EDITORIAL

Don't lose it before we use it

Get to know your charter

THE CITY CHARTER will be a hot topic in the next few weeks and if Proposal R passes in the Primary, Detroiters will be hearing about the revision process for 3 years. For many it feels like we just voted on a revision.

While some were and are critical of the Council by District system the last revision put into place, the revision also included community powers and protections that many consider beneficial. One of the issues here is that Detroiters are just getting to know their City Charter.

The implementation of and adherence to the City Charter were interrupted by Emergency Management and Bankruptcy. Due to this, certain aspects of the Charter are just now coming online, one example being the Police Commission that was voted on last year.

With the current political climate in Detroit and Lansing there are many risks to opening the Charter now. There is also a process for changing specific aspects of the Charter through amendment. This process can be taken up without opening the entire Charter.

Detroit People's Platform recommends a No vote on Proposal R. Rather than support the revision we are calling on the Mayor, City Council, Clerk and all who work within the framework created by the Charter to more fully implement, empower and abide by it.

Whether Proposal R passes or not, whether the Charter Revision Candidates are on the ballot in November or not, Detroiters have an opportunity to learn what powers and protections the current Charter provides and how they can be used by and for betterment of our community.

To get to know the City Charter better attend the Detroit People's Platform 2018 Summit. The City Charter will be on the agenda.

2018 Summit

Saturday, September 8th

9 a.m. - Noon

(full day ends 4:30pm)

SEIU, Local 1 2211 E. Jefferson

Agenda:

Morning

9:00 Registration

Welcome, Movement Building

Breakouts, Report Outs and Recognition

Afternoon

Organizing to win on our issues

Register Today!

<https://bit.ly/2lQZx1t>

or call 313.338.9396

Five years ago, in 2013, 250 Detroiters gathered at Marygrove College to create the **Detroit People's Platform**. Since the days of Detroiters Resisting Emergency Management and the Bankruptcy we have continued to fight for Transit Justice, Land Justice, Affordable Housing, Equitable Development and Good Jobs. We also have worked in coalition and allied around water affordability, shutoffs and public health and on strategies to interrupt foreclosures and displacement.

Now we will come together again in 2018. In the morning we will break out on our issues, report out on the work of the last five years and recognize our efforts. In the afternoon we will work on organizing to win on our issues Lunch will be provided. Childcare is available. The event is free, but registration is limited, deadline Sept. 1st. Use the link, code or call 313.338.9396 and leave a message.

PROPOSAL R

On Tuesday, August 7 2018 there will be one proposal on your primary ballot. Proposal R asks Detroiters if they favor a "general revision" of the City Charter. If passed, the Charter could be changed in many ways. Proposal R, if passed, could:

R

RESTRICT

Community Power & Oversight

R

REDUCE

Government Accountability

R

RUIN

our chances to restore Democracy

Vote NO on R

DETROIT People's PLATFORM

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